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THE GERMAN-POLISH BORDER: 1941-1951

by

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B.A., Pennsylvania State College, 1951

Presented in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

1953

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Date June 1 1953

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## CHAPTER I

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

That part of the northern European plain lying between the Oder and Vistula Rivers historically is the area of German-Polish border conflicts. The Great Lowland Plain lies in an equatorial direction, stretching in a fan-shaped manner from northern France into the whole of European Russia. Almost three hundred miles wide is the German-Polish border area between the Baltic seaport of Danzig in the north and the West Beskid Mountains directly south. A twenty to forty inch rainfall like that of the Great Lakes region in North America and gray-brown podzolic soils similar to the rich earth of our mid-Atlantic states enable the inhabitants of this area to engage in profitable enterprises. Never rising above three hundred and twenty-eight feet, the elevation drops to sea level near the river banks and the Baltic coast. To the south of the plain, from west to east, lie the Sudetan, the Beskid, and the East Carpathian Mountains. The Baltic Sea cuts into the lowlands in the north, and into it flow the river systems of the Oder and Vistula at Stettin and Danzig respectively. At their nearest points, the Oder and Vistula are approximately two hundred miles apart. Without a natural boundary, the area is the highway between Western and Eastern Europe.

It is this region that both Germans and Poles contend to be rightfully theirs. The lack of natural frontiers left open the territory between the Oder and Vistula for migration and conquest. As Polish strength declined and German power increased, western Poland gradually diminished in area. Germany controlled Polish territories, some as far east as the Vistula and beyond, by the end of the eighteenth century. Thus, both nations occupied the Oder-Vistula region for long periods, and consequently, each claimed historical rights to sections at the exclusion of the other.

Because both nations have occupied the Oder-Vistula plain, the delineation of the German-Polish border creates a problem. The frontier, situated too far to the east or west, satisfies only one group and develops into a source of national irredentism for the other. Loss of land breeds hatred, revenge, and it is a rallying force to war. Whether or not, the World War II settlement of the border avoids German-Polish friction requires, among other factors, an investigation of regional history. Poland desires recognition of the border along the Oder and Western Neisse Rivers. If too far west, the Oder-Neisse line will be a source of German irredentism. An historical analysis of the border can foretell the extent to which German discontent may arise from the Oder-Neisse line.

## Part II

In 1740, Prussia's territory along the Polish border and Baltic Sea consisted of Newmark, Brandenburg, Eastern Pomerania to the Oder, and the eastern section of Western Pomerania. The Polish provinces of West Prussia in the north and Posen to the south separated East Prussia on the Baltic from western German territory. Before Frederick the Great connected East Prussia with the Fatherland by conquering the intervening corridor, an opportunity arose for expansion in the south-east. It was the war of the Austrian Succession that opened the door for Prussian territorial extension. Frederick participated in the war "in order that he might rob a neighbor whom he had promised to defend."<sup>1</sup> The neighbor robbed was Austria and the prize was Silesia.

When Maria Theresa ascended the Austrian throne after the death of Charles VI on October 20, 1740, the recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction by European powers was necessary. Soon after, Frederick supported Maria Theresa by confirming his father's recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction while at the same time offering military aid if the need should arise. Although Prussia was apparently friendly, Prussian armies invaded Silesia on December 16, 1740, and while Frederick completed a successful coup, he told Maria Theresa that he would support the Pragmatic Sanction if she would acknow-

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1. Sir Charles Petrie, Diplomatic History, 1713-1933 (London, 1948), p. 36.



ledge his Silesian claims. Because France and Saxony supported the claims of the Elector Charles of Bavaria to the Hapsburg throne, Maria Theresa had no other choice but to lose Silesia in an attempt to win Prussia's accession to the Austrian cause. In August 1742, Austria ceded Upper and Lower Silesia to Prussia.<sup>2</sup> What had formerly comprised the Austrian-Polish frontier in the west, became the southern section of the Prussian-Polish border.

Thirty years later, the time was propitious for the partitions of Poland. Conditions and events had made it so. The weakness of the moribund Polish government, stemming from the infiltration of Russian influence into Polish government circles and the abuse of the liberum veto, culminated in the election of a Russian puppet to the Polish throne after the death of Augustus II in 1763. He was Stanislaus Poniatowski of whom Catherine II said, "had the least right of all and must therefore feel more indebted to Russia than anyone else."<sup>3</sup> The policies of uniting all of the Slavs and spreading the influence of the Greek Orthodox Church were two which dominated Russian relations with Poland. However, Russian interests in the Balkans diverted Catherine's attentions, and she realized that Austria, who had been blocked in Silesia, also had interests in the two

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2. Ibid., pp. 26-36.

3. Ibid., p. 52.

power vacuums to her northeast and southeast. The Confederation of Bar, a reform movement, started the Polish Civil War in 1768. Although it was quickly suppressed by Polish reactionaries with the aid of Russian troops, the insurrection definitely threatened Russian predominance in Poland.<sup>4</sup>

The decaying Polish kingdom attracted Prussia. Frederick met with Joseph II of Austria in 1769 and 1770 and came to the conclusions that only a partition of Poland could prevent a general war. Catherine soon realized the extent of Frederick's ambitions, and she believed that the latter would be a more valuable ally than Austria whenever Russia expanded into the Balkans. While Prince Henry of Prussia visited St. Petersburg, she suggested the partition plan which proved to be favorable to his brother. Consequently, on February 17, 1772, Russia and Prussia agreed to partition Poland, and Austria joined them in August. Frederick took West Prussia, making East Prussia contiguous to German territory, and thus, cut off Poland from the Baltic.<sup>5</sup>

The Turkish declaration of war on Russia in 1786 lessened Russian intrigue in Poland whose diet then adopted a stronger constitution on May 3, 1791. Eight months later, however, the Russo-Turkish war ended, leaving Russia free to deal with her western neighbor. Events in western

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4. Reginald W. Jeffery, The New Europe, 1789-1889 (Boston, 1911), pp. 152-168.

5. Ibid.

Europe provided an opportunity for Catherine.

I ougdel my brains to urge the Courts of Vienna and Berlin to busy themselves with the affairs of France. I wish them to do this that I might have my own elbows free. I have many unfinished enterprises and I wish these two courts to be fully occupied so that they may not disturb me.<sup>6</sup>

A French war was not a small possibility as time proved, for on April 20, 1792, the French Assembly declared war on Austria.<sup>7</sup>

Polish malcontents, who had been harbored in Russia since the adoption of the May Constitution, formed the Confederation of Targowice and supported the restoration of the old form of government. Four days later, May 18, 1792, Catherine announced her support of the new confederation. On May 19, Russian troops crossed the Polish border. The weakened government appealed to Prussia, but the latter announced that she had promised to defend the Poland of 1790 and, therefore, that there was no casus faederis. Russia overwhelmed opposition within six weeks and liquidated the threat of Prussian or Austrian hegemony in Poland. Not wanting Berlin and Vienna to draw together or cause them to abandon their interest in France, Catherine decided not to annex all of Poland. The idea of a second partition appealed to Frederick William. In March 1792, Prussia

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6. Petrie, op. cit., p. 57.

7. Jeffery, op. cit., pp. 156-157.

and Russia divided more Polish land, and Prussia took Danzig, Thorn, and Posen.<sup>8</sup>

For a desperate cause, the Poles united forces under Kosciusko. Prussia and Russia sent in troops, but again and for the last time, Poland bent before the force of the Russian armies who captured Warsaw on November 8, 1794. When the empress suggested that "the time has come, not only to extinguish to the last spark the fire that had been lighted in our neighborhood, but to prevent any possible rekindling of the ashes," the existence of the kingdom of Poland was doomed.<sup>9</sup> In the second partition of Poland, Austria had received no territory. Prussia had been beneficial as an ally as long as Poland had existed, but now her value decreased in comparison with that of Austria in the Balkan question which was in the next plan of Russian acquisition. Consequently, Austria participated in the third partition, and Prussia received only the territory south of East Prussia, called new East Prussia.

In Central Europe, it was a fear of Russia and the open jealousy and distrust between Austria and Prussia which led to the three partitions of Poland. Each feared the aggrandizement of the other; each was determined, in the spirit

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8. Benard Pares, A History of Russia (New York, 1951), p. 272.

9. Petrie, op. cit., p. 60.

of the age, to secure compensation; it was impossible to think of Prussia and Austria combining in defense of German interests to oppose Russia. The October, 1795 settlement resulted in the extinction of the kingdom of Poland, and the German-Polish border was replaced by a German-Russian line.

Silesia, South Prussia, West Prussia, and New East Prussia formed the additions between 1740 and 1795 that enlarged the Prussian border area at the expense of Poland.

### Part III

"I have two hundred thousand soldiers in the duchy of Warsaw," said the tsar. "Let them try and drive them from it. I have given Saxony to Prussia."<sup>10</sup> This was the quid pro quo which faced the Congress of Vienna in 1815. It was understood between the two powers that Prussia would give up some of her Polish lands in return for Russian support to her claims of Saxony. The Prussian-Russian agreement occurred in 1813. Having overrun Russia in 1807, Napoleon created the duchy of Warsaw out of Prussian and Austrian lands rather than from the acquisitions of Russia whose favor he was then seeking. Six years later, Russia and Prussia concluded the Treaty of Kalish and at the time produced the apparent fait accompli.<sup>11</sup>

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10. Ibid., p. 121.

11. Ibid., pp. 120-121.

The Prussian eastern border was no longer a question to be settled by the parties directly affected. A change in its delimitation came at a time when a continental war had been won by several powers. The questions of Saxony and Poland were inextricably linked. If an enlarged kingdom of Poland were created, Austria and Prussia then would demand compensation elsewhere. Austria would be satisfied with Italian and Illyrian gains, but it was known that Prussia demanded the whole of Saxony.<sup>12</sup>

In the settlement of the Prussian-Russian problem, the Vienna negotiators divided into two camps. France and Austria opposed Prussia and Russia; Great Britain assumed the position of mediator, but later joined the courts of Paris and Vienna. At first there were two Austrian policies. Metternich's extreme antipathy to the tsar caused him to oppose Russia's acquiring the whole of Poland; while on the other hand, his ministers, Stadion and Schwarzenberg, opposed Prussia's increasing her power in the German states. Castlereagh discarded the idea of restoring a free and independent Poland and worked instead for a strong Prussian state to act as a counter with Austria in central Europe against the possible resurgence of French and Russian aggression. The situation was also complicated by the schizophrenic character of Tsar Alexander, who at one time

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12. Harold Nicolson, The Congress of Vienna; A Study in Allied Unity (New York, 1946), pp. 164-181.

thought of himself as a great general conquering lands as far west as the Oder and at other times visioned himself as the benevolent and enlightened ruler following the 'moral duty' of establishing an independent Poland."<sup>13</sup>

Yet it was the irrefutable logic of Talleyrand that pointed out the real danger, Russian imperialism:

Russia does not wish for the re-establishment of Poland in order to loose what she has acquired of it: she wishes it so as to acquire what she does not possess of it. . . . Thus to re-establish Poland in order to give it entirely to Russia . . . and to extend her frontiers to the Oder, would mean creating so great and imminent a danger for Europe that . . . if the execution of such a plan could only be stopped by the force of arms, not a single moment should be lost in taking them up.<sup>14</sup>

On the other hand, Talleyrand did not agree with Castlereagh that a strong Prussia would constitute a valuable make-weight in the European balance. Talleyrand also expressed the fear of a strong German nation to the east: "If the Prussian generals obtained their desires then, Prussia would in a few years form a militarist monarchy which would be very dangerous to her neighbors."<sup>15</sup> The sagacity of Talleyrand's diplomacy cannot be overemphasized. He knew that France did not have the strength to continue an imperialistic program at this time. The real danger lay with the victors, and the rise of the unsatisfied powers of Russia and Prussia

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13. Ibid., pp. 148-163.

14. Ibid., p. 155.

15. Ibid., p. 156.

threatened the balance in Europe. While Castlereagh was forming his policy in view of recent events, French and Austrian policies looked to the future.<sup>16</sup>

The Vienna settlement of central Europe was woven with French threads. The Russian-Prussian plan for Poland and Saxony was watered down so that Prussia received only two-thirds of Saxony and the kingdom of Poland was created from the duchy of Warsaw and placed under the personal rule of Tsar Alexander I. The Polish province of Posen, taken by Napoleon for the duchy of Warsaw, was retroceded to Prussia, although the latter lost New East Prussia. For the next century, the provinces of East Prussia, West Prussia, Posen, and Silesia remained within the Prussian eastern border.<sup>17</sup>

#### Part IV

The Poles were allowed a small measure of self-government, and because the tsar was to be called the "King of Poland," foreign powers recognized the existence of Poland, in theory at least. Prussian-held lands bordered Poland in the west and north for the next forty-eight years. At the end of this period, 1863, with the abolition of the constitution of Congress Poland by the tsar, the kingdom of Poland in

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16. Ibid., pp. 164-181.

17. Ibid.



theory as well as reality became extinct.<sup>18</sup> There was no Prussian-Polish border. A Prussian-Russian boundary existed, and that became a German-Russian border, which lasted until 1914, after the formation of the German Empire under the Prussian king in 1871.

It was Polish nationalism, although for one-hundred and fifty years unsuccessful in reviving a free and independent Poland, that was the important factor in bringing about the creation of a German-Polish border after World War I. The first world war conflict was the opportunity for which the Poles were waiting. Were Austria, Germany, and Russia defeated, an independent Poland would have chance to rise. However, because they could not fight all three at once, the Poles decided to assist Austria rather than Russia. And the Russians made only vague promises and dismissed all attempts at mediation by Great Britain, France, and Italy as interference in a domestic Russian question. By 1915, Russian troops were driven out of most of Congress Poland, and the country was divided into Austrian and German administrative zones.<sup>19</sup>

In order to obtain Polish military help, the Central Powers proclaimed the independence of Poland on November 5,

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18. W. F. Reddaway et. al. (ed.), The Cambridge History of Poland (Cambridge, 1941), p. 276.

19. Ibid., pp. 126-130.

1916, but without fixing its borders or selecting a king.<sup>20</sup>

But two events in the early months of 1917 destroyed Germany's hoped-for success with the Polish people. On January 22, 1917, President Wilson told the United States Senate that:

No peace can last, or ought to last, which does not recognize and accept the principle that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand peoples about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property. I take it for granted, for instance if I may venture upon a single example, that statesmen everywhere are agreed that there should be a united, independent and autonomous Poland.<sup>21</sup>

Although there was no agreement in either belligerent camp concerning Poland, this statement from the strongest neutral power was not to be disregarded. The Polish question had been an uncomfortable one for Great Britain and France, because their Russian ally did not favor the restoration of a free and independent Poland. But the revolution in February and March of that year, resulting in the collapse of the Tsarist regime and the proclamation of Poland's independence by Russia gave a new meaning to the Polish problem. Therefore, with an ally in opposition to an independent Poland replaced by one friendly to her, Great Britain and France were free to back the restoration

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20. Reddaway, op. cit., p. 485.

21. Ibid., p. 488.

of a Polish state.

The collapse of Russia and the Bolshevik peace with the Central Powers in March, 1918, left Eastern Europe at the mercy of Germany; and the Allies, in their own interests, were constrained to set up Poland as a barrier to German expansion.<sup>22</sup> On January 8, 1918, the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, announced support for an independent Poland. Three days later, the president of the United States proclaimed his Fourteen Points, of which the thirteenth declared:

An independent Polish state should be erected, which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.<sup>23</sup>

After the conclusion of the Brest-Litvosk Treaty, which omitted mention of provisions for an independent Poland, the Polish underground forces joined the western states against Germany and Austria-Hungary.<sup>24</sup>

The Paris Peace Conference opened on January 18, 1918. During the next four months, Lloyd George of Great Britain, Clemenceau of France, and President Wilson of the United States debated issues involved in the Polish problem. With

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22. Ibid., p. 488.

23. Ibid., p. 488.

24. Ibid., p. 489.

regard to the German-Polish border, because the allies agreed that an independent Poland should be restored, Germany and Poland as well as the three victorious powers held conflicting views.

At the conference, Poland asked that the southern districts of East Prussia, Silesia and all of West Prussia including Danzig and Posen be returned to her. The Polish delegate maintained that sixty-eight percent of the inhabitants of Posen spoke the Polish language, and there were districts in Silesia and southern East Prussia which contained a majority of Polish nationals. Although the majority group in West Prussia and Danzig consisted of Germans, both areas were historically Polish and the seaport of Danzig was vital to Polish economy.<sup>25</sup>

Germany, receiving the conference decisions, opposed any decrease of her eastern border by the creation of a new Poland. To separate East Prussia and Danzig from Germany by the retrocession of West Prussia and Danzig to Poland, meant a strangulation of the German Baltic province according to the Germans. They also insisted that the Polish requests contradicted the Wilsonian principle of self-determination.<sup>26</sup>

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25. Ibid., pp. 490-511.

26. What Really Happened At Paris, A Report by the American Delegates, Chapter IV, Poland (New York, 1921) p. 27.

On the delimitation of the German-Polish border, the United States and France differed from the British in policy. Wilson backed Polish demands to the full, and Clemenceau, believing that Poland would be a beneficial ally to the east of Germany, pressed for a strong Poland. But Lloyd George asserted that complete historic justice to Poland by returning her pre-partition boundaries of 1772 might create a German irredenta. On the question of Posen, the three representatives of the leading powers agreed that it should go to Poland. Before a solution was found, the Allies consented to the inclusion of the Covenant of the League of Nations on April 28, 1919, in the Peace Treaty, which set up an instrument that the negotiators depended upon for a solution of the German-Polish border problem. The allies decided that a plebiscite in Silesia would be held since both Germany and Poland claimed a majority in the areas. On June 16, 1919, the Allies and associated powers said of Danzig:

The population of Danzig is and has for a long time been predominately German; just for this reason, it is not proposed to incorporate it in Poland. But Danzig, when a Hanza City, like many other Hanza Cities, lay outside the political frontiers of Germany, and in union with Poland enjoyed a large measure of local independence and great commercial prosperity. It will be now replaced in a position similar to that which it held for so many centuries.<sup>27</sup>

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27. Ibid., p. 27.

And Danzig was internationalized under the League of Nations.

The preparations for the plebiscite lasted two years, and two uprisings of the Polish population in Silesia finally forced the authorities to conduct the plebiscite in March, 1921. The results proved inconclusive, and it was decided to partition the area. However, the first plan for partition only led to a third rebellion which was quieted by forming another plan. This final arrangement gave Poland important collieries, steelworks, and factories but left many predominantly Polish coal, industrial, and rural communities under German rule. Plebiscites were also held in two contested East Prussian areas in which the Polish language predominated, taking place at a moment when Poland was gravely endangered by Russian invasion, for the latter were near Warsaw. Moreover reversing the propaganda that Poles had used in Silesia, Germany misrepresented Poland to the predominately Protestant East Prussian voters as a hotbed of Catholic religious intolerance. Consequently, Germany won these areas.<sup>28</sup>

For the following nineteen years, East Prussia remained separated from the rest of Germany by the Polish control

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28. Reddaway, op. cit., p. 485.

of the Corridor, which Poland had gained by the Treaty of Versailles with the addition of Posen, and the success of a plebiscite also shifted the German-Polish border west in Upper Silesia. The settlement of the German-Polish border after the first World War on a purely historical basis necessitated a revision to the border-line of one hundred and fifty years ago in the time of Frederick the Great. Until the First Partition, Poland had controlled West Prussia, Danzig, Posen, and parts of Pomerania. In comparison with the German occupation of these lands, the Polish period of occupation is longer by several hundred years.

When the Treaty of Versailles was signed, June 28, 1919, the negotiators did not delimit Poland's eastern frontier. The Supreme Council of the Allied and Associated Powers established provisional eastern frontiers for Poland in December, however, on an ethnographic basis. But both Poland and Russia refused to consider it binding. The line was called the Curzon Line. After hostilities ceased, Poland, Russia, and the Ukraine signed the Peace Treaty of Riga on March 18, 1921, by which the Polish-Russian boundary lay seventy thousand square miles east of the Curzon Line. The territory between the Curzon Line and the frontier established by the Treaty of Riga contained about as many Poles as there were Ukrainians

and White Ruthenians together.<sup>29</sup> And Lwow and Vilna contained a majority of Poles. Although Russia and Poland never recognized the Curzon Line as legal, it became an irritating issue that was to arise in World War II.

## Part V

The border of the new, independent Poland, emerging from the peace treaties after the first World War, contained two troublesome areas, the Danzig corridor and the area between the Curzon Line and Poland's eastern frontier recognized by the Treaty of Riga. And German and Soviet desire to regain Polish territory lost after World War I caused the Fourth Partition of Poland in 1939. Hitler claimed that the corridor which separated East Prussia from the Fatherland rightfully belonged to Germany. He based German claims on historical possession of the Danzig corridor since the eighteenth century. And it seemed unnatural, according to the Fuhrer, that East Prussia was separated from Germany by Polish-held territory.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1929, Germany and Soviet Russia secretly negotiated for the partition of Poland. Although Great Britain and France endeavored to ally the U.S.S.R. against Germany, Hitler's proposals

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29. James Thomson Shotwell and Max A. Laerson, Poland and Russia, 1919-1945 (New York, 1945), pp. 1-50.



to Soviet Russia promised her more gains than did the British and French negotiators. The German-Soviet non-aggression pact, concluded on August 23, 1939, provided for peaceful relations between the two for a period of ten years, economic ties, and cooperation in foreign policy. In a secret protocol, Germany and Soviet Russia agreed to the partition of Poland along the Pissa, Narew, Vistula, and San Rivers.

Thus, on September 1, 1939, the German armies marched into Poland, and sixteen days later, Soviet Russia crossed Poland's eastern border with the excuse of protecting the White Ruthenians and Ukrainians from German aggression. But the Fourth Partition of Poland lasted only until June of 1941. Because of a disagreement in the Balkans and other problems whereby it was evident that the two countries were unable to agree on spheres of influence, Hitler attacked her former ally and the Fourth Partition era ended.

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30. Great Britain, Documents concerning German-Polish Relations and the Outbreak of Hostilities between Great Britain and Germany on September 3, 1939. (London, 1939).  
U. S. Department of State, Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office, Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941.

## CHAPTER II

### THE WARTIME NEGOTIATIONS AFFECTING THE GERMAN-POLISH BORDER

#### Part I

After Hitler<sup>1</sup> turned his war machine against the U.S.S.R. on June 22, 1941, and the Japanese fleet attacked Pearl Harbor, the United States, Great Britain, and Soviet Russia informally allied in mutual defiance of German aggression. "Win the war" and the "unconditional surrender of Germany" became the military goals.<sup>2</sup> But the peace objectives were not so clear. Differences over the Polish question foreshadowed the complete breakdown of frontier agreements in peacetime. Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States were allied, but with regard to Poland, it was a "strange alliance."<sup>3</sup>

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1. Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) started working in German politics in 1918. He founded the National Socialist movement in Germany, 1925, which helped him attain power in 1933 as Chancellor of Germany and Head of State the following year.
  2. The decision requiring "unconditional surrender of Germany," to which Churchill assented, was made at the Casablanca Conference by Roosevelt. Robert E. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins (New York, 1948), p.
  3. John R. Deane, The Strange Alliance (The Story of Our Efforts at Wartime Co-operation with Russia) (New York, 1947).

About six weeks after the German attack on Soviet Russia, the latter declared that "the Soviet-German treaties of 1939 relative to territorial changes in Poland" were invalid.<sup>4</sup> Great Britain also announced that she had not recognized any changes in Poland's boundaries effected since August of 1939.<sup>5</sup> Soviet Russia reversed her position in December, 1939, however, when Stalin<sup>6</sup> asked for the recognition of the Soviet boundaries as they were before the German attack in 1941.<sup>7</sup> A position from which the U.S.S.R. never retreated, the Soviet claim to seventy-two thousand square miles of eastern Poland was the main cause of the post-war German-Polish border problem.

The United States and Great Britain had no post war policy for Poland in 1941, other than the nebulous guarantee of the Atlantic Charter, point two of which reads: "They desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned."<sup>8</sup> Although Soviet Russia previously had agreed

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4. Polish Embassy in Washington, Polish-Soviet Relations, 1918-1943, Official Documents, (n. d.), pp. 107-108.

5. Ibid., pp. 108-109.

6. Stalin, Joseph Vissarionovich, (1879-1953) was one of the leaders of the October Revolution of 1917. As Marshall of the Red Army, he was promoted to Generalissimo in 1943. He held these offices in Soviet Russia: General Secretary of the Communist Party and President of Soviet Council of Ministers.

7. William L. Neuman, Making the Peace (Foundation for Foreign Affairs: Washington, D. C., 1950), p. 18.

8. Ibid., pp. 19-20.

to the principles of the Charter, she did not consider the expression of a desire as binding; nor did Great Britain. Fearing a Russo-German rapprochement, the British conducted negotiations with the U.S.S.R. during the winter and spring of 1942, which might have culminated in Britain's official recognition of the Soviet boundary claims, but the United States insisted that territorial agreements be postponed.<sup>9</sup> By the failure of three power agreement for Soviet Russia's post-war annexation of eastern Poland, the spirit of the Atlantic Charter was thus maintained.

In March, 1943, however, it was evident that Russia's aim to keep her 1941 western boundaries had not changed. The Foreign Secretary of Great Britain, Anthony Eden,<sup>10</sup> reported to President Roosevelt<sup>11</sup> that Prime Minister Sikorski<sup>12</sup> of the Polish government-in-exile in London desired the annexation of East Prussia to Poland. Under

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9. Ibid., pp. 19-20.

10. Anthony Eden, Rt. Hon., (1897- ), was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1935-1938, when he resigned in protest of British appeasement to Germany. 1940-1945, he was again Secretary of State under Churchill.
11. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, ( -1945), was President of the United States, 1933-1945, nominated for the Vice-Presidency in 1920, and served as Governor of New York, 1929-1933. He published his public papers and addresses.
12. General Wladyslaw Sikorski, (1881-1943) was Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army, 1940-1943. As Prime Minister of the Polish-exile-Government in London, he was noted for his desire to compromise with the Russians without becoming subservient.

consultation, Maxim Litvinov,<sup>13</sup> Soviet ambassador to the United States, announced that the U.S.S.R. would support Poland's bid for East Prussia. But his government, however, wanted to keep the Soviet position from Polish officials in order to use it in bargaining with them at the peace table. The Soviets planned to back Polish annexation of East Prussia in return for recognition of the Curzon Line. Roosevelt and Eden favored Polish incorporation of East Prussia, but of Soviet aims in eastern Poland, they neither verbally approved nor objected.<sup>14</sup>

Between Poland and the U.S.S.R., however, relations grew more strained. The first territorial argument occurred in January, 1942. On the 9th, the Polish government informed the Soviet Union that:

the inclusion of Lwow among "other Ukrainian cities" must be the result of a misunderstanding, for from the historical point of view and from that of international law, and as far as the ethnological constitution of its population is concerned, Lwow was and remains a Polish city.<sup>15</sup>

The Soviet government bluntly replied with the following note:

. . . . While finding it impossible to enter into a

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13. Maxim Litvinov, (1876- ) a Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, he was Soviet Ambassador to the United States, 1941-1943.

14. Neuman, op. cit., p. 21.

15. Polish Embassy, op. cit., p. 206.

discussion on the historical and legal bases on which the city of Lwow or any other town in the territories of the Ukrainian SSR and the White Ruthenian SSR belong to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the People's Commissar deems it his duty to inform the Embassy that in future he will not be able to accept for consideration Notes of the Embassy containing declarations of this kind.<sup>16</sup>

The tone of the note reflected Soviet contempt for a powerless Polish government. Regardless of the Polish-Soviet agreement of July 30, 1941, which abrogated the German-Soviet pact of 1939, the U.S.S.R. did not consider the former as binding. As an insult to Poland, as a threat to her independence and territorial integrity, the Soviet note dictated terms upon which Polish-Soviet relations were to be conducted. And thus, despite former declarations to the contrary, Soviet Russia, in 1942, claimed her acquisitions of the fourth partition.

There were other clashes during the rest of the year. A military agreement had provided for the formation of a Polish army on Soviet soil to fight with the U.S.S.R. against Germany. In December, the Soviet government stopped recruitment for the Polish army on the ground that Poles were refusing to fight Germans. The Soviet implication that the Polish government was pro-Fascist was denied, and Poland declared that her army could not attack without supplies promised by the U.S.S.R.<sup>17</sup> The

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16. Ibid., p. 207.

17. Ibid., pp. 126-146.

failure to create a Polish army behind Russian lines and the persistent Soviet denunciations of the London government provoked the Polish note of February 25, 1943, which affirmed that: ". . . neither before the outbreak of this war nor during it has the Polish nation ever agreed to any co-operation with the Germans against the Soviet Union."<sup>18</sup> The Polish army had tried to co-operate with the U.S.S.R., and Poland repudiated the Soviet "malicious propaganda."<sup>19</sup> The Polish Army problem never was resolved, and it proved to be an irritating disagreement that strained Polish-Soviet relations.

With regard to the boundaries, the Polish note continued:

It is absolutely absurd to suspect Poland of intentions to base the eastern boundaries of the Polish Republic on the Dneiper and the Black Sea, or to impute to Poland any tendencies to move her frontier farther to the east . . . from the moment of the conclusion of the Polish-Soviet Treaty of July 30, 1941, the Polish Government has maintained . . . the status quo previous to September 1, 1939, is in force; . . . this attitude . . . is in conformity with the Atlantic Charter.<sup>20</sup>

The Soviet reply reasserted that the anti-Soviet policy of the Polish government advocated the "partition of the Ukrainian and Bielo-Russian lands in favour of the policy of

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18. Ibid., p. 208.

19. Ibid., p. 208.

20. Ibid., p. 208.

plundering the Ukrainian and Bielo-Russian peoples;" and the Poles were violating the Atlantic Charter.<sup>21</sup>

By Poland insisting on the recognition of her pre-war frontiers, she did not contradict the spirit of the Atlantic Charter. With the abrogation of the fourth partition treaty, Great Britain, Poland, and the Soviet Union recognized Poland's frontiers which included Ukrainian and White Russian populations. By the Atlantic Charter terms, Poland did not have to relinquish territory, unless it was the will of those within her eastern border. The Charter implied that the wishes of the people concerned were to be expressed through a plebiscite supervised by disinterested parties and not held by the Soviets alone as was the plebiscite in Poland after the fourth partition. Until a plebiscite, under the auspices of the allies, could be held after the war, Poland's insistence on maintaining her 1939 borders was legally correct. However, the Soviet accusations were merely a part of the policy to discredit a stubborn government which did not acquiesce to a diminution of Polish territories. The campaign started with the breakdown of Polish-Soviet military co-operation and the alleged Polish intentions to extend her borders to the Dneiper and the Black Sea. And the Katyn affair was the next step.

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21. Ibid., pp. 208-209.



On seven different occasions between October, 1941, and March, 1943, the Polish government asked the Soviet Union either by note or in conference the whereabouts of fifteen thousand Polish officers captured in 1939. The Soviet government replied that all Polish officers had been granted amnesty. But the German radio on April 12, 1943, announced that a mass grave of ten thousand Polish officers had been found near Smolensk, and the Nazis claimed that these officers had been killed by the Russians in 1940, when Smolensk, lying east of the Curzon Line, was under Soviet control. On April 15, the Soviet information Bureau in Moscow announced that "in 1941, Polish prisoners of war were employed on fortification work at the west of Smolensk where they fell into German hands after the Soviet forces withdrew from that region."<sup>22</sup> Confronted by two different stories, the Polish government asked the International Red Cross to investigate the graves.<sup>23</sup> Moscow severed relations

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22. Ibid., p. 43.

23. Ibid., p. 129. The International Red Cross replied that they could not investigate without the consent of all parties concerned, and the Soviet Union did not agree to the proposal. However, the U.S.S.R. sent a Soviet committee which placed the blame on the Germans. The members of the committee were: Professor Burdenke (Chief surgeon of the Red Army), Chairman Alexei Tolstoy, Nikolay (Metropolitan of Kiev,) Lieutenant-General Gundorov, Kolesnikov (Chairman of the executive of the Union of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies), Potemkin (People's Commissar for Education), General Smirnov (Chief of Medical Service of Red Army), and Melinkov (Chairman of the Smolensk Regional Executive Committee). The London Times Weekly Edition, January, 19, pp. 6-7.

with the Polish government-in-exile in London on April 26, charging that the Polish government had never requested an explanation of the affair, and that it was co-operating with Hitlerite Germany "for the purpose of wresting territorial concessions" from the U.S.S.R.<sup>24</sup>

The Poles were justified in seeking an explanation, but, not knowing of Soviet responsibility for the Katyn massacre, the London government unwittingly forced a severance of relations. Churchill and Roosevelt ignored the issue in order to preserve a united force against Germany. Thus, not exposed through investigations, the Soviet Union used the Katyn affair to denounce the London government, an action having disastrous effects for Poland. The rupture of relations made easier the introduction of a communist government into Poland and Soviet domination there.<sup>25</sup>

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24. Ibid., pp. 211-247.

25. August 1952, the House of Representatives investigating committee, the Madden Committee, concluded that the Russians were responsible for the Katyn Massacre, and that the United States Administration during World War II had purposely covered up the evidence for the Soviet Union's continued co-operation in the war. (New York Times, December 28, 1952, p. 1.)

## Part II

At the Teheran Conference, Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt agreed to the general disposition of Polish frontiers, although an announcement was not made until after the Yalta Conference.<sup>26</sup> The Big Three decided that Poland's eastern frontier should follow approximately the Curzon Line, and the partitioned state would receive German territory in the north and west as compensation.<sup>27</sup>

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26. Hopkins reports that in the discussion of the Polish frontiers, "Roosevelt took no part." (Sherwood, op. cit., p. 797.) And Hull states that negotiations on this question were carried on "largely by Churchill and Stalin." (Cordell Hull, Memoirs, [New York, 1947], p. 29.) Byrnes says, however, that at Yalta, President Roosevelt spoke of his statement expressed at Teheran which was that the Polish-Russian border would follow the Curzon Line, but leave Lwow and portions of the oil fields in Poland. (James F. Byrnes, Speaking Frankly [New York, 1947], p. 29.) Stettinius concurs with Byrnes, and both were at Yalta. (Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., Roosevelt and the Russians, the Yalta Conference [New York, 1949], p. 151.) Also Lane wrote: "Molotov at the Moscow Conference, October 9-20, 1944, informed Mikolajczyk, in the presence of Churchill, Eden, and Harriman, that the agreement for the Curzon Line was the just solution of the Polish frontier and invited the three listeners to deny his statement if it were untrue. The three, it is reported, sat silent. Molotov added that Roosevelt had preferred that his agreements on this pact be kept secret." (Arthur Bliss Lane, I Saw Poland Betrayed [New York, 1948], p. 36.) Mikolajczyk, Prime Minister of the Polish government-in-exile in London at that time, was at the Moscow meeting and gives the same report as Lane. (Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, The Rape of Poland, Pattern of Soviet Aggression [New York, 1948], p. 96.)

27. See Appendix for text of Yalta Protocol.

The western boundary was not delineated. How far Poland could expand to the north and west, the three powers did not specify. The eastern border, however, as defined by Stalin, was definite, and it never changed.

Soviet insistence on the recognition of the Curzon Line, for which the U.S.S.R. had persisted since 1941, caused another Polish-Soviet crisis the month after the Teheran Conference. The Red Army crossed the Polish borders on January 5, 1944, and on that day, the London government appealed to her nationals "to enter into co-operation with Soviet commanders in the event of resumption of Polish-Soviet relations."<sup>28</sup> In reply, the TASS agency stated:

First, in the Polish declaration the question of the recognition of the Curzon Line as the Soviet-Polish frontier is entirely ignored. This can be interpreted only as a rejection of the Curzon Line. Second, as regards the Polish Government's proposal for the opening of official negotiations between it and the Soviet Government, it is easy to understand that the Soviet Government is not in a position to enter into official negotiations with a government with which diplomatic relations have been severed.<sup>29</sup>

And in another note, Soviet Russia offered Poland compensation to her north and west in return for acceptance of the

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28. Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, The Rape of Poland, Pattern of Soviet Aggression (New York, 1948), pp. 270-272.

29. Polish Government Information Center, Polish Facts and Figures, (New York, March 10, 1944 - April 25, 1945), No. 2, March 25, 1944, p. 12.

Curzon Line, but the Soviet government continued to denounce the London Poles.<sup>30</sup> Having secured Churchill's and Roosevelt's promises to support the Curzon Line at the peace conference, the Soviet tone was obdurate.

The London government asked the United States and Great Britain to intercede, but the U.S.S.R. refused their good offices.<sup>31</sup> In the last of January, Churchill endeavored to persuade Premier Mikolajczyk<sup>32</sup> to agree to the Curzon Line. Even with the promise of compensation in the north and west, the London government remained firm and unyielding to Soviet pressure for Polish territory. The government-in-exile stated:

The dictatorial demand by the U.S.S.R. that we must agree in advance to the recognition of the Curzon Line as the future Polish frontier cannot be accepted by the Polish government. The result of the conversations concerning frontiers can be realized only after the end of the war.

However, the London Poles did compromise to strong opposition with the following proposition:

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30. Mikolajczyk, op. cit., pp. 207-208.

31. Ibid., pp. 273-277. The London Times Weekly Edition, May 31, 1944, p. 8.

32. Stanislaw Mikolajczyk. He was wartime leader of the Polish Peasant Party and Prime Minister of the Polish-government-in-exile in London, 1943-1944, and became Vice-Premier in the Polish Provisional Government, 1945. Between 1945 and 1947, he led the opposition to the Communist Party in Poland, and in 1947, he was forced to leave for his own safety.

During war hostilities, we could consent to a demarcation line running east of Vilna and Lwow. The territory west of this demarcation line, after this territory is freed from German occupation, would be taken over by the Polish government. The territory east of the demarcation line should go to the administration of the Soviet military authorities, with the full participation of representatives of all Allied Powers.

But [sic] the Polish government considers it a duty to state that the intention of incorporation into the Soviet Union of a part of East Prussia with Konigsberg is against the interests of the Polish state . . . and restrains her free access to the sea.<sup>33</sup>

The London government earlier had asked for the addition of East Prussia to Poland. This had been acceptable to the U.S.S.R. in 1943, but again the Soviet Union increased her demands. Even though the Polish government had consented to Russian military occupation of part of the disputed territory, Polish refusal to agree to the Curzon Line before the Polish-Soviet meeting ended hope of reconciliation at that time. Without a boundary agreement, the U.S.S.R. refused to resume relations with the London government.

Throughout the rest of 1943, Churchill urged the London government, in Parliament and in conference, to accept the Curzon Line.<sup>34</sup> During a stormy meeting in October, 1943, with Churchill and Stalin, Mikolajczyk learned for the first time that Roosevelt had agreed to the Curzon Line at

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33. Mikolajczyk, op. cit., p. 209.

34. The London Times Weekly Edition, February 23, 1944, p. 7; May 31, 1944, p. 8. United Nations Review, Vol. IV, No. 3, March 15, 1944, pp. 103-107; Vol. IV, No. 5, July 15, 1944, pp. 191-195.

Teheran.<sup>35</sup> Because it was a national election year, Roosevelt had not committed himself publicly in 1944 and had left the initiative to Churchill.<sup>36</sup> In November, the United States announced that she would agree to any settlement at which Great Britain, Poland, and the U.S.S.R. arrived.<sup>37</sup> For Mikolajczyk to further oppose the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union was impossible.

There was also danger of a communist coup d'etat. Russia had recognized the Lublin government in July and at Moscow had insisted that she would deal only with that group.<sup>38</sup> Mikolajczyk recommended his government to concede

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35. Mikolajczyk, op. cit., p. 96.

36. Roosevelt's equivocal policies led the American Poles to believe that he was opposed to the Curzon Line. After Yalta, Mr. Rozmarek, President of the Polish-American Congress, said that Roosevelt would not have been supported by the American Poles if the elections had come before the Crimean Conference. (Lane, op. cit., pp. 60-62.) Roosevelt told Mikolajczyk, in June, 1944, that the United States would not go to war with the Soviet Union over Poland's eastern boundary, but as "arbitrator" Roosevelt would endeavor to retain at least Lwow and the adjacent oil fields in Poland. However, he never mentioned the Big Three agreement on the Curzon Line at Teheran. (Mikolajczyk, op. cit., pp. 59-61.)

37. Lane, op. cit., p. 70.

38. The communist Committee of National Liberation originated as the "Union of Polish Patriots," December, 1941, at Saratov, under the leadership of Wanda Wasilewski, communist writer. (Mikolajczyk, op. cit., p. 24.) The Soviet Union recognized the Polish Committee of National Liberation as the Polish government, July 31, 1944. In December, 1944, the Lublin government proclaimed

the Curzon Line issue. Both the Polish underground and the London group refused however, and the premier resigned.<sup>39</sup> The new government formed was known to be more anti-Soviet in policy.<sup>40</sup> And thus, there was no possibility of reconciliation.

Conflicts continued between the London and Soviet governments while the U.S.S.R. gained control of the internal affairs of Poland. By the time of Yalta, Stalin held the same strategic position that Tsar Alexander I had before the Congress of Vienna, for, at both times Russian armies were on Polish soil. It was the Battle of Warsaw that increased Soviet power in Poland during World War II. As the Red army approached the Polish capital in late July, 1944, the Moscow radio broadcast an appeal for the Warsaw underground to rise up and fight the Germans. The underground army attacked German divisions in Warsaw without allied help. From August until January, the Soviet army remained only six miles outside of the city, although

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itself the Provisional Government of Liberated Democratic Poland, and they were formally recognized by the U.S.S.R., January 5, 1945. (Mikolajczyk, op. cit., pp. 72-73, 107.) At the Moscow meeting, Stanislaw Bierut suggested a coalition of the London and Lublin governments, of which fourteen out of eighteen offices would be held by members of the Lublin group. (Ibid., pp. 93-100.)

39. Lane, op. cit., pp. 68-69.

40. Ibid.



London and Warsaw Poles begged for assistance. British and American aid was impossible without permission to land planes on Soviet soil which the U.S.S.R. denied. After sixty-three days, the underground capitulated to Germany, and the home army was annihilated before the Red army crossed the Vistula three months later.<sup>41</sup> Consequently, not only was the Soviet army in Poland but also the underground which might have later opposed Red control was ineffective before Yalta.

Developments shifted the emphasis from the frontiers question to the survival of the London government. By the time of the second meeting of the Big Three, it was a question of whether Poland was to become a Soviet satellite. Churchill placed the blame on the Polish government-in-exile. In his opinion, had the Poles given in to the Curzon Line in January, 1944, the danger from the communist Lublin group would never have arisen.<sup>42</sup> His judgment, however, is too harsh.

Polish stubbornness was understandable. To give up half of the area of Poland for undefined and possibly lesser portions in the north and west was undesirable, especially

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41. Polish Government Information Center, Polish Facts and Figures, (New York, March 10, 1944 - April 25, 1945), No. 10, October 10, 1944.

42. The London Times Weekly Edition, November 1, 1944, p. 8.

after Soviet Russia's further demands for half of East Prussia in the Konigsberg area. Until the Moscow conference in October, 1944, the position of the United States was equivocal. As long as there was a possibility that the United States would oppose Soviet territorial expansion, the Polish government believed in the possibility of a better settlement, because it was not until after the Teheran agreement became known that Mikolajczyk urged his government to compromise. But by then it was too late. The Lublin group had been recognized by the U.S.S.R. Had Poland kept silent about the Katyn massacre, in an effort to remain friendly with Soviet Russia regardless of territorial concessions demanded, she would have had to acquiesce to Soviet control in northern East Prussia, lose half of her land, and suffer the loss of the majority of her young intelligentsia at Katyn and the Battle of Warsaw.<sup>43</sup> For these losses, Poland was to be compensated with an area half the size of her forfeitures in the east. To an ethnic group, surviving since the eighteenth century, only by stubborn protest, these submissions would have been impossible as long as Poles had some hope of a better settlement. Had the London government known in February, 1944, of the Big

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43. The Polish underground was opposed to ceding territory east of the Curzon Line to the Soviet Union. (Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, The Rape of Poland, Pattern of Soviet Aggression [New York, 1948], pp. 284-285.)

Three decision, it might have compromised with Soviet Russia then.

It is questionable, however, that the Soviet Union would have resumed relations without additional concessions from Poland. After the first clash over the Polish-Soviet border in 1942, the U.S.S.R. was determined to discredit the London government and force a submission. Soviet Russia called the government-in-exile "Fascist" before the Katyn affair. As early as 1942, the Soviet Union had shown an unwillingness to co-operate with the London government. If Poland had not protested the Katyn massacre, Soviet Russia would have continued with demands until the Polish government was subservient or forced out by a communist coup d'etat such as occurred in Rumania after Yalta.<sup>44</sup> U.S.S.R. wanted a "friendly government" in Poland, and that meant Soviet dictated communism.

The Anglo-American policy during the war was to keep allied unity against Germany at all costs. During 1943, after it was known that Russia wanted eastern Poland, the Foreign Relations Committee in the United States Senate rejected a resolution that the "Allies should seek no post-war territorial aggrandizements."<sup>45</sup> The committee was

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44. Byrnes, op. cit., pp. 52-53.

45. Arthur H. Vandenberg, The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg (Boston, 1952), pp. 52-53.

afraid that opposition might force the Soviet Union to join Germany.<sup>46</sup> The Allies were winning the war, but Great Britain and the United States were losing the peace to Soviet imperialism.

### Part III

At the Yalta Conference, convened from February 4 to 11, 1945, the settling of the Polish question was one of the most important problems. The creation of a new Polish government had top priority over the frontier question. Because the United States and Great Britain continued to recognize the London government and the Soviet Union rejected that group in favor of the Lublin Poles, a new government, acceptable to all, had to be formed.

Anglo-American policies for Poland compromised between Polish and Soviet extremes. While refusing to recognize the Lublin government, Churchill and Roosevelt were willing to form a new interim government with representatives of both London and Lublin Poles. The combination made no difference to the U.S.S.R., if it allowed for communist dominance. And the ambiguous phraseology of the Yalta protocol that permitted the Lublin group to control the new Provisional government and eventually subjugate all of

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46. Ibid., pp. 52-53.

Poland.

The weakness of the Yalta agreement with regard to Poland lay in the misplaced Anglo-American emphasis on the words, "inclusion" and "reorganization." The United States delegation urged that democratic leaders from Poland and abroad should not be just included in the Provisional government already established in Poland, but that the Lublin government should be reorganized to include other Polish leaders outside and in Poland.<sup>47</sup> This line of reasoning, however, was ineffective to insure equal status for both groups in the new government. "To reorganize and include" is a vague term that had many interpretations. By recognizing the Lublin group as the Provisional government instead of using the London Poles as a basis for reorganization, the three powers accentuated the importance of the Lublin government. And when the Lublin government was reorganized the following spring with the inclusion of democratic Poles from Poland and abroad, the communists held the official power.<sup>48</sup>

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47. Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., Roosevelt and the Russians, the Yalta Conference (New York, 1949), pp. 212-225.

48. Mikolajczyk, op. cit., pp. 24-25. Thirteen out of the twenty-one offices were held by the Lublin Poles. The important positions were given to the Lublin group as follows: Presidency to Stanislaw Bierut; Prime Ministry to Edward Osobka-Morawski; First Deputy Premiership to Wladslaw Gomulka. Mikolajczyk was Second Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture and Land Reform. (Ibid., pp. 131-132.)

The crux of the matter, however, centered on the elections. Because the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity was to be temporary, free elections were to allow the Poles to choose their own government. But Churchill and Roosevelt failed to provide adequate machinery to guarantee the holding of free elections. There were only promises which could not be enforced. The Yalta declaration stated:

To foster the conditions in which the liberated peoples may exercise those rights, the three governments will jointly assist the people in any European liberated state or former Axis satellite state in Europe where in their judgement conditions require

- (a) to establish conditions of internal peace;
- (b) to carry out emergency measures for the relief of distressed peoples;
- (c) to form interim governmental authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest establishment through free elections of governments responsive to the will of the people; and
- (d) to facilitate where necessary the holding of such elections.

When, in the opinion of the three governments, conditions in any European liberated state or any former Axis satellite state in Europe make such action necessary to discharge the joint responsibilities set forth in this declaration.<sup>49</sup>

Fulfillment of Crimean pledges hinged on the principle of allied unity. Only if all three powers believed action in Poland necessary, did conditions exist for joint execution of the Yalta protocol. Either Great Britain, Soviet

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49. For text of Yalta Protocol regarding Poland, See Appendix.

Russia, or the United States could declare that the Polish situation did not require three power assistance. Under the latter circumstances, the Polish Provisional government was free to control the elections. The ambassadors of the three powers did not have authority to insist that elections be carried out in a democratic manner. Only in the case of Allied opinion could they take action in Poland. The Yalta provisions, weakened by Anglo-American disregard for a possible breakdown of Allied co-operation, comprised the policy upon which Churchill and Roosevelt placed their hopes for the establishment of a free and independent Poland.

By the frontier problem, Soviet Russia achieved another victory. Churchill and Roosevelt had approved of the Curzon Line previously, but at Yalta they requested that the Polish boundary be moved east of Lwow and her adjacent oil fields. Stalin rejected the Anglo-American plan and suggested that Poland receive compensation for Lwow and oil fields by expanding to the Oder and Western Neisse Rivers. In anticipation of Polish extensive expansion to the Western Neisse, the American State Department recommended to Roosevelt an alternate border.

According to the latter, Poland would obtain about one hundred miles along the Baltic Sea, Danzig, the southern half of East Prussia (Soviet Russia wanted the Konigsberg area), and Upper Silesia, but not as far west as the Oder

and Western Neisse. The British plan called for a line along the Oder in the north but east of the Western Neisse in the south. Both Churchill and Roosevelt believed that an Oder-Neisse line would arouse extreme German irredentism.<sup>50</sup> Stalin did not insist upon the Oder-Neisse however, and, not reaching a compromise, the three powers concurred that the final delimitation of the German-Polish border would await the peace treaty.<sup>51</sup>

The Yalta Conference cannot be judged apart from the military situation at that time. The western Allies had not reached the Rhine, but Poland and most of eastern Europe lay under the control of the Red army. A few weeks before Yalta, Roosevelt told Stettinius about the atom bomb although it was not completed. The American delegation, however, decided not to use its unknown quality to force favorable decisions at the Crimean Conference.<sup>52</sup> Even though the end of the war seemed near, the United States military staff was extremely anxious for Soviet Russia to enter the war against Japan. However, the Far Eastern conflict affected the Polish question only indirectly, for in a secret agreement, Roosevelt condoned Soviet territorial expansion in the Far East, but not in

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50. Stettinius, op. cit., p. 150.

51. See Appendix.

52. Stettinius, op. cit., p. 38.



Poland, for her promise to enter the war against Japan.<sup>53</sup>

Secretary Stettinius summed up the American attitude at Yalta:

As a result of the military situation, it was not a question of what Great Britain and the United States would permit Russia to do in Poland, but what the two countries could persuade the Soviet Union to accept.<sup>54</sup>

In view of the results, Soviet Russia accepted nothing unfavorable to her. The abortive attempts of Churchill and Roosevelt to insure a democratic government in Poland were to affect Anglo-American policy on the German-Polish border question for the next year and a half. In contrast to the agreement for the new Polish government, the western frontier declaration was definite. But it was a mistake. Had Anglo-American representatives objected to the Oder and Western Neisse boundary with the same firmness that Stalin had held to the Curzon Line, and had they substituted at Yalta an alternate line to the east of the Oder-Neisse, the U.S.S.R. would not have produced at Potsdam the subsequent fait accompli with respect to the border.

There were four reasons, however, for this error:

(1) British and American policies for the German-Polish border differed; (2) Churchill and Roosevelt were more

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53. Department of State, Agreement Regarding Japan, signed at Yalta, February 11, 1945, Executive Agreement Series, 498, Publication 2505 (Washington, D.C., 1946.)

54. Stettinius, op. cit., p. 163.

interested in establishing a democratic government in Poland, and, eventually, in Germany than in the border question; (3) the two western leaders did not count on the breakdown of Allied unity; (4) the Red army controlled Poland.

Moving the German-Polish border east of the Soviet-proposed line of the Oder-Neisse before the Polish elections, might have meant the defeat of the London Poles, who were known to be backed by Great Britain and the United States. But war-time Polish-Soviet relations should have been a warning of Soviet methods and the consequent breakdown of Allied co-operation. In which case, avoiding the German-Polish border question until after the elections did not aid the London Poles in winning. However, the position of the Red army at the time of Yalta was probably the most important factor. Great Britain and the United States had no intention of going to war over the Polish question.

The three and one-half years of war-time negotiations between the United States, Soviet Russia, and Great Britain exposed their differences in political policies. Soviet Russia had two goals, the Curzon Line and an obedient Polish government. Polish, British, and American counter suggestions were brushed aside in the Soviet forward drive to secure her western border. Still believing

in the eventual emergence of an independent Poland, the United States and Great Britain urged territorial compensation for Poland in the north and west. At Yalta, it should have been obvious to Churchill and Roosevelt that their meaning of a free and independent Poland was different from the Soviet interpretation. Had the Anglo-American delegations realized that they were leaving the German-Polish frontier open for the expansion of a Soviet satellite state, the German-Polish frontier question might have been settled at Yalta. In exchange for Lwow and the oil fields, Stalin could have agreed to a line east of the Oder-Neisse.

The three power alliance was a "strange alliance." Not so much in the fact that there were differences among the allies, but it was a strange alliance because of the failure on the part of Churchill and Roosevelt to realize that three power unity could not be achieved in international affairs. Soviet Russia not only wanted to secure her borders but also to extend them as much as possible. While in office, Churchill never gave up hope for Poland's independence, nor did Roosevelt whose

. . . policy toward the Soviet Union was in the nature of a gigantic gamble. Not recognizing fully the ideological implications of Marxism, he evidently believed that the Russians were suspicious and unco-operative largely because the western nations had first encircled them and then treated them as outcasts. He appears to have concluded that if we were to give the Soviets

all they wanted, generously and without demur, they might be weaned away from their dangerous ideas of world revolution and co-operate wholeheartedly in the common enterprise of building a better tomorrow. He was eager to meet the Soviet leaders and talk things over with them, for he was confident that the force of his personality, combined with the powerful position of the United States, would cause them to be more reasonable.<sup>55</sup>

But the hopes of Yalta were shattered before the third meeting of the three powers at Potsdam.

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55. Thomas A. Bailey, America Faces Russia; Russian-American Relations From Early Times to Our Day, (New York, 1950).

### CHAPTER III

#### THE BORDER AND THE BREAKDOWN OF ALLIED UNITY

In his State of the Union address, on January 6, 1945, President Roosevelt observed that "the nearer we come to vanquishing our enemies, the more we inevitably become conscious of differences among the victors."<sup>1</sup> Within two years of Yalta, the uncompromising and divergent policies of the allies destroyed their post-war unity in the settlement of German and Polish affairs. Poland, the last of the liberated states to hold "free and unfettered elections," yielded to communist pressure. Germany became a pawn between East and West, and a peace treaty with her seemed remote in January, 1947. The breakdown of four power cooperation in carrying out the Yalta and Potsdam agreements on Germany and Poland led to a change in the policies of the United States and Great Britain. And Anglo-American reluctant acquiescence on the Oder-Neisse line was replaced in the fall of 1946 with a policy of non-acceptance.

In July, 1945, the Oder and Western Neisse Rivers formed the German-Polish border. Unilaterally, the Soviet

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1. (U.S.) Department of State, Department of State Bulletin.

Union transferred, before Potsdam, territory east of the Oder-Neisse to Polish administration. Stalin stated that the Germans had fled before the advance of the Russian army, and that the area was without a government. Claiming that the rear lines of the Red army needed protection, the U.S.S.R. gave thirty-nine thousand square miles of Germany to Poland. At Potsdam however, the Polish representatives admitted that at least one and a half million Germans still remained east of the Oder-Neisse, a number large enough to form a government to maintain order. But Poles from east of the Curzon Line were moving in and pushing Germans out. By transferring Poles westward, the Soviet Union and Poland informally fixed the German-Polish border at the Oder-Neisse.<sup>2</sup>

The placing of German territory under Polish administration without Big Three consultation contradicted the spirit of Allied unity. For the same military reasons that had governed the Yalta Conference, however, Great Britain and the United States were in no position at Potsdam to oppose Soviet policy for Poland. Although the three Powers reaffirmed that the final delimitation of the German-Polish border would await the peace settlement, they approved of Polish administration in the following area:

. . . the former German territories east of a line running from the Baltic Sea immediately west of

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2. Byrnes, op. cit., pp. 79-81.

Swinemunde, and thence along the Oder River to the confluence of the western Neisse to the Czechoslovak frontier, including that portion of East Prussia not placed under the administration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in accordance with the understanding reached at this conference and including the area of the former free City of Danzig.<sup>3</sup>

It was a Soviet fait accompli. Great Britain and the United States did not favor Polish control as far west as the Oder-Neisse, but they were powerless to effectively oppose it without going to war. And the West would not consider war because of the German-Polish border issue alone.

The Oder-Neisse line was not permanent technically. But Article XIII nullified the force of that provision by stating:

The three governments having considered the question in all its aspects, recognize that the transfer to Germany of German populations, or elements thereof, remaining in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, will have to be undertaken. They agree that any transfer that takes place should be effected in an orderly and humane manner.<sup>4</sup>

Poland interpreted the above article as tacit permission to expand into and expel Germans from undesignated areas to her north and west. Immediately, she started removing Germans not only from pre-war Poland but also from German territory under her administration. Maintaining that the Big Three would have provided for German displacements from areas that were to remain German, Poland declared that Great

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3. See Appendix.

4. Ibid.

Britain and the United States indirectly supported the Oder-Neisse line at Potsdam.

During the year after Potsdam, the United States, Great Britain, and France did not openly object to the German-Polish border at the Oder-Neisse. They even instructed their embassies in Warsaw to insist that deportation of Germans be effected in the most humanitarian manner possible.<sup>5</sup> The Allied Control Council in accordance with the Potsdam Declaration, permitted the transfer of seven million German-speaking people from eastern Europe to the four zones in Germany. And Secretary of State Byrnes<sup>6</sup> said: "The settlement agreed at Potsdam requires the shifting of boundaries in the East, and the movement of several million Germans from other countries."<sup>7</sup>

But at the Council of Foreign Ministers in July, 1946, the French foreign minister more accurately expressed the situation and tersely remarked as follows:

The Potsdam conference made agreements with respect to eastern Germany, which were provisional in principle, but in fact were fundamental, and with which

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5. Lane, op. cit., pp. 256-257.

6. James Francis Byrnes (1879- ) was Secretary of State, 1945-1947. He served as Associate Justice of Supreme Court between 1941 and 1942, and later, he became Director of Economic Stabilization, 1942-1943, and Director of Office of War Mobilization, 1943-1945. He published, Speaking Frankly.

7. Byrnes, op. cit., p. 89.



the French government did not take issue.<sup>8</sup>

The application of the Potsdam provisions to the transference of Germans made the temporary frontier final. The three powers would not have allowed Poland to expel millions of Germans east of the Oder-Neisse Rivers if the area was to remain German.

Thus, Great Britain and the United States accepted defeat at Potsdam but not willingly. During the same council meeting, British foreign minister Bevin<sup>9</sup> stated:

. . . one of my first experiences, . . . was to find myself in that Cabinet where I had to accede to a new Polish frontier which I have never yet been able to reconcile with the Atlantic Charter, but which the very necessities of war at that time compelled me to agree to.<sup>10</sup>

The Big Three did not formally agree on a final border. But Bevin meant that because of Article XIII, the area placed under Polish administration was to go to Poland at the peace conference. By which procedure, the German-Polish border would then follow the Oder and Western Neisse Rivers. Soviet Russia achieved her goal at Potsdam for which she had been

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8. (U.S.) Department of State, U.S. Economic Policy toward Germany, European Series 15, Publication 2630 (Washington, 1946), p. 32.

9. Bevin (1881- ) had been in politics and a trade union official since 1929. He was Great Britain's Secretary of State For Foreign Affairs, 1945-1947.

10. (U.S.) Department of State, Occupation of Germany, Policy and Progress, European Series 23, Publication 2783, August 1947. Pp. 225-228. Full text of speech is given.

pressing since the Crimean meeting. And Great Britain and the United States admitted as much during the following year.

The breakdown of allied unity in Germany and the failure of the Polish Provisional government to carry out the Yalta and Potsdam pledges, directly affected the German-Polish border question. By not formally recognizing the final delimitation of the frontier, the West held a political weapon. And in the fall of 1946, they reversed their policies. In an attempt to thwart Soviet eclipse of Germany and Poland, Anglo-American policies became firmer; the West threatened not to recognize the Oder-Neisse line at the peace conference.

Two main factors caused the collapse of Inter-Allied control of Germany: the disagreement on German reparations and the subsequent failure to treat Germany as an economic unit. At Yalta, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed on twenty billion dollars, fifty per cent of which would go to Soviet Russia, as a "basis for discussion" for German reparations.<sup>11</sup> The meeting of the reparations commission in Moscow ended in an impasse. Soviet Russia maintained that twenty billion dollars was the reparations figure and not a basis for discussion.

At Potsdam, however, the three powers decided on the

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11. See Appendix for text of Yalta Agreement.

exactment of reparations in the form of German assets abroad and removal of capital industrial equipment not necessary for the peacetime economy of Germany.<sup>12</sup> Because the Potsdam agreement also based reparations in the form of capital industrial equipment in relation to her peacetime economy, the possibility of placing reparations on a dollar basis was superseded by the later agreement. Yet throughout 1946, the Soviets argued that the United States had agreed at Yalta to the figure of twenty billion dollars as final instead of as a basis for discussion. Therefore, the U.S.S.R. believed she was entitled to exact reparations from German exports to make up the deficit not reached through the value of capital industrial equipment and external assets.<sup>13</sup>

The Soviet position proved detrimental not only to Germany but also to the occupying powers. Germany required imports of food and other essentials to sustain a healthy standard of living and meet the costs of the occupying forces. Because all German external assets were earmarked for reparation, and the looted gold uncovered in Germany had to be restored to the countries from which it had been taken, exports based on current production were the only means whereby Germany could be self-supporting.

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12. See Appendix for text of Potsdam Agreement.

13. (U.S.) Department of State, Occupation of Germany, Policy and Progress, op. cit., pp. 34-36.

But if the Soviets took exports for reparations, the West would have to finance German imports. Indirectly, they would be paying Germany's reparation bill. For these reasons, the Western powers insisted that the Potsdam reparation plan be carried out.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the next year, the occupying powers failed to achieve a common policy regarding German imports and exports. There was no way to check the Soviets taking German exports as reparations, because the U.S.S.R. closed her zone to foreign observers. Without allied unity in Germany, unilateral action of one power meant not only impediment to Germany's recovery, but also expense to the other powers. If unification failed to emerge, the West had no alternative but to join their zones.

At Paris, the foreign ministers discussed German issues. Secretary Byrnes presented a draft, on April 29, for a twenty-five year demilitarization of Germany to be guaranteed by the four powers. He had suggested this idea to Molotov<sup>15</sup> at the London Meeting in September. During a discussion with Stalin, in December, Byrnes thought the

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14. Ibid., pp. 34-36.

15. Vojcheslav Mikheilovich Molotov, (1890- ) was the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, 1939-1946. He was a Deputy Prime Minister of the Soviet Union and Foreign Minister between 1946 and 1949.

Generalissimo favored the plan. But at Paris, Molotov rejected the written draft because it did not provide for German disarmament and demilitarization. Molotov was incorrect, however. The Byrnes' draft even went farther, by establishing a four-power commission with authority to investigate each zone. This commission, of course, would have broken down the barriers between the zones and supplied the Control Council with information regarding reparations removals from each zone. The Soviets did not accept the American Draft Treaty, and Byrnes warned that reparations from the U.S. zone to the Soviet Union would stop if German economic unity failed. Receiving no reply, the American zone temporarily halted deliveries to the U.S.S.R.<sup>16</sup>

After the members reconvened for the second half of the Paris Conference, Molotov attacked western policy. His denunciations were unique. Disregarding the previously discussed issues, he struck at the three powers with new points. Molotov claimed: the West wanted to create an agrarian state of Germany; the West caused failure of the reparations settlement; the West refused to place the Ruhr under four-power control which meant that France, Great Britain, and the United States would deprive Germany

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16. For full text of the Draft Treaty See: (U.S.) Department of State, State Department Bulletin, Vol. XIV, No. 357, Publication 2524, May 5, 1946, pp. 815-816.

of this basin without a plebiscite. With a final stroke, Molotov predicted that settlement on a German peace treaty was not in the near future.<sup>17</sup>

Molotov made it apparent that the rift had widened between East and West. After months of negotiations, there was no agreement on the reparations for Germany. The West had no intention of allowing four-power control of the Ruhr when they were even forbidden information concerning the Soviet zone. And the West publicly objected to dismemberment of the Ruhr from Germany.<sup>18</sup> It was noticeable that Molotov did not suggest a plebiscite for the eastern German border as he had for the Ruhr.

Allied unity in Germany did not concern the U.S.S.R. The following day, the United States offered to merge her zone with any or all of the other zones. Great Britain accepted, and the two treated their zones as one economic unit as of January 1, 1947. France joined later in the year.<sup>19</sup>

On the other side of the German-Polish border, the

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17. Vital Speeches of the Day (New York, 1952), Vol. XIII, No. 20, August 1, 1946, pp. 620-622.

18. (U.S.) Department of State, Occupation of Germany, Policy and Progress, European Series 23, Publication 2783, August, 1947.

19. (U.S.) Department of State, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XV, No. 389, Publication 2709, December 15, 1946.

Polish Provisional Government of National Unity failed to carry out the Potsdam commitments. With regard to elections, the Potsdam declaration stated:

. . . the Polish Provisional Government in accordance with the decisions of the Crimea Conference has agreed to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot in which all democratic parties shall have the right to take part and to put forward candidates, and that representatives of the Allied press shall enjoy full freedom to report to the world upon developments in Poland before and during the elections.<sup>20</sup>

Regardless of her Potsdam pledge, Poland did not hold elections for a year and a half.

The Poles as well as their communist-controlled Provisional government regarded Article XIII of the Berlin Declaration as an admission that the Oder-Neisse line was final. All of the Polish political parties backed that line as just compensation for Poland's eastern loss. And her attitude influenced Western policy on the German-Polish border. Great Britain and the United States refrained from asserting that the Oder-Neisse was not final, until it was obvious that Poland was a Soviet satellite.

By April 1946, American Ambassador Lane<sup>21</sup> was convinced that the Polish Provisional government was totali-

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20. See Appendix for Potsdam text.

21. Arthur Bliss Lane (1894- ) has been in the United States Diplomatic Service since 1916. U. S. Ambassador to Warsaw, 1945-1947. He published: I Saw Poland Betrayed.

tarian. Since November, the United States and Poland had been negotiating for an economic treaty and the extension of American credit to Poland. Lane opposed the treaty. An exchange of notes on April 24, 1946, brought to conclusion negotiations for the extension by the Export-Import Bank of limited credit of forty million dollars to Poland. Again, Lane protested with the following note:

When the terroristic activities of the Security Police came to an end, when freedom of the press is restored, and when American citizens are released from Polish prisons--not until then should the United States' public funds be used to assist the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity.<sup>22</sup>

Because of Lane's reports, Poland pledged that she would uphold the Yalta and Potsdam agreements with respect to elections. Poland promised to hold them in 1946, grant freedom of press, and respect the rights of American citizens. Conditions did not change, however, because the Provisional government maintained that it had never broken the Yalta and Potsdam agreements in the first place.<sup>23</sup>

On June 30, 1946, Poland held a referendum. It was a trial run by the government to ascertain whether the communist party would win in the coming elections. The British, French, and American Embassies concluded before

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22. Lane, op. cit., p. 237.

23. Ibid., p. 240.



the voting that the Polish Peasant Party, the only opposition to the communist party, could not win, although it represented eighty per cent of the electorate. During the pre-election campaigning, the government blocked the Polish Peasant Party from campaigning on equal basis with other parties. The police imprisoned members of the large party and intimidated the population. By the time of the referendum, there was no doubt which party the Provisional government favored. After the election, the government did not open the ballot boxes in the presence of representatives of all parties as was prescribed by law. The communist party claimed an overwhelming victory, although it was estimated that they had been supported by less than twenty per cent of the electorate.<sup>24</sup>

After the referendum, Poland told the West that elections could not be held until the following spring. Knowing that the people did not support the government, the communist party wanted chance to gain better control of the population. The Soviet Union clandestinely backed the Provisional government. By this time, it was evident that there was no accord in the policies of the four powers in Poland and Germany.

A few weeks later, Bevin said of the Polish frontier:

We see no reason why we should finally ratify the

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24. Ibid., p: 240.

cession of this vast territory to Poland without being satisfied that these assurances (of Potsdam) have been fully carried out. We should also wish to be assured that the Poles would be able to develop this territory so that the economic resources were properly used and that it did not become a wilderness from which Germans had been excluded but which the Poles would be unable to populate.<sup>25</sup>

The note was a warning to Poland. Unless she held free elections and permitted other freedoms, the United Kingdom did not feel obligated to support the Oder-Neisse line at the peace conference.

And on September 6, 1946, Byrnes also declared a change in American policy. For the first time since Potsdam, Byrnes announced that the final delimitation of the frontier should await the German peace conference. The specific statement that the United States would support at the peace settlement Soviet proposals for the transfer to the U.S.S.R. of Monigsberg and adjacent areas, emphasizes the omission of any promise to support the Oder-Neisse line.<sup>26</sup>

The speeches representing the policies of the United States and Great Britain were directed to the Soviet Union and the Polish Provisional government. Anglo-American refusal to recognize the Oder-Neisse line because of

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25. New York Times, July 26, 1946, p. 1.

26. (U.S.) Department of State, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XIII, No. 347, Publication 2478, September, 1946, pp. 249-251.

Eastern failure to meet Potsdam requirements showed a revamping of policies, from that of submission to the Potsdam fait accompli to one of open non-acceptance. Their position was weak, but Germans and Poles did not take the threat lightly.

Vice President Gomulka<sup>27</sup> assailed Byrnes for having the "audacity" to give the Germans any hope of frontier revisions. Also, he said that four million Poles moved into the territory and within a few months there would be five million.<sup>28</sup> Peasant Party leader, Mikolajczyk, opposed Byrnes' policy. The day after the Stuttgart speech, Poles held a mass meeting before the American Embassy in Warsaw in protest of American policy.<sup>29</sup>

With Soviet backing, Poland opposed the West with firmness. On September 21, President Boleslaw Bierut<sup>30</sup> indirectly referred to a Polish-Soviet agreement on the border question. He said that he

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27. Wladyslaw Gomulka ( ) Member of the Polish Workers' Party, he was the first Deputy Minister of the Polish Government of National Unity. Belongs to the Communist Party.

28. New York Times, September 9, 1946, p. 10.

29. New York Times, September 8, 1946, p. 26.

30. Boleslaw Bierut (1892- ) Assisted reorganizing the National Council in Poland in 1943. He was elected President in 1944, President of the Polish Provisional Government, and President of the Polish Government in 1947. He is affiliated with the community party.

. . . could not understand the note of sympathy among the Allies toward Germany. If there are politicians who think they can make changes in Poland, they are wrong, for such a plan would have catastrophic results.<sup>31</sup>

The address, at Katowice of the Polish Premier Edward B. Osobka-Morawski,<sup>32</sup> was more revealing: "Generalissimo Stalin told us that those who wish to shake our western frontiers, which were set at Potsdam, would not only have to deal with the Polish army but also the Red army."<sup>33</sup>

The West, for the second time, thought there was a Polish-Soviet treaty on the German-Polish frontier. In April 1945, the Department of State notified the Soviet government it received press and radio reports that certain Soviet-occupied territories, including Danzig, had been formally incorporated into Poland. The replies were not specific.<sup>34</sup> The copy of a Polish-Soviet treaty, released to the American ambassador at Moscow in March 1946, reveals that only the Curzon Line was formally agreed to.<sup>35</sup> But the Osobka-Morawski statement made it clear that Poland and the U.S.S.R. reached agreement on the

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31. New York Times, September 21, 1946, p. 5.

32. Edward B. Osobka-Morawski, member of Polish Communist Party and Polish Premier.

33. New York Times, October 13, 1946, p. 4.

34. Lane, op. cit., p. 249.

35. (U.S.) Department of State, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XIV, No. 348, Publication 2478, March 3, 1946, pp. 340-341.

western border. According to Byrnes, a Polish-Soviet Treaty was signed on August 16, 1945, by which the Soviet Union and her satellite recognized the Oder-Neisse as final.<sup>36</sup> With the Soviet Union backing Poland, Anglo-American threats of non-recognition held little weight in Warsaw.

But on the other side of the border, German reaction favored Western policy. A few days after the Stuttgart speech, certain Germans urged the people to petition the Allied Military government toward restitution of pre-war boundaries between Germany and Poland. Although the Soviet censor in the U.S.S.R. zone of Berlin refused favorable commentary in the paper, "Neue Zeit," leaders in other zones urged that territory east of the Oder-Neisse be returned to Germany.<sup>37</sup>

One of the purposes of Byrnes' speech was to smoke out Soviet attitude on the eve of elections in French and British zones. Previously, the Soviet government had baited Germans with possible return of former territories under temporary Polish administration. At the same time, communists in Poland promised Poles a permanent border along the Oder-Neisse. However, the American

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36. Byrnes, op. cit., pp. 191-2.

37. New York Times, September 8, 1946, p. 11.

statement finally evoked a reply from Molotov. He took Poland's side, but significantly enough delayed until German elections were over.<sup>38</sup>

The result of these elections showed communist parties receiving less than ten per cent of the votes.<sup>39</sup> Soviet policy on the frontier question had weakened her position in Germany. Although the Soviets delayed announcements, the damage had already been caused by Osobka-Morawski's statement of Stalin's promise to back the Oder-Neisse line with force if necessary. By the end of the year, all of the zones held elections. Except for the Soviet zone and Berlin, the communist vote was less than ten per cent in the rest of Germany. In contrast to their weakness in western zones, the communists doubled their percentage to twenty per cent of the electorate in Berlin, but that was not enough to win control. And in the Soviet zone, the communists claimed eighty per cent of the vote.<sup>40</sup>

During November, 1946, the Provisional government accused the Polish Peasant Party of co-operating with "Fascist" countries who had denied Poland her western

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38. Lane, op cit., p. 253.

39. (U.S.) Department of State, Occupation of Germany, Policy and Progress, 1945-1946, European Series 23, Publication 2783, August 1947, pp. 57-58.

40. Ibid.

territory.<sup>41</sup> Even though this party had objected to Byrnes' speech and had supported the Oder-Neisse line since Yalta, communist leaders called it pro-fascist. Because of similar attacks, Ambassador Lane recommended that the United States remain silent on the frontier question until after Polish elections. Lane's communique read:

Unless we are prepared to use physical force, we cannot unilaterally change the frontier, and our espousal of the thesis (which was implied if not actually expressed in Byrnes' Stuttgart speech) that the western frontiers were not to be permanently Polish made a universally bad impression in Poland.<sup>42</sup>

Although the United States did suffer a severe setback with respect to prestige in Poland, she gained favor in Germany. It was obvious that communists controlled Poland, and therefore, the West did not influence the election results. But in western zones of Germany, Great Britain, the United States, and France permitted all parties to equally participate in the campaigns and voting. Irritated by Soviet eclipse of Poland and East Germany, the West determined to prevent this in Western Germany.

On January 17, 1947, the communist party proclaimed a sweeping victory in the Polish elections.<sup>43</sup> The hopes for the rise of a free and independent Poland expressed

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41. Lane, op. cit., pp. 263-265.

42. Ibid., pp. 263-265.

43. Poland of Today, Vol. 2, No. 3, March 1947.

in the provision of Yalta and Potsdam were obsolete. There was no reason any longer for Anglo-American policy to place Poland over and above Germany. In the practical sense, Poland existed as a satellite. The Soviet course for Poland, since the early part of the war, was an undeviating path toward domination. Had Roosevelt and Churchill realized Soviet Russia's aims and communistic methods for taking over a government, the border might have been settled east of the Oder-Neisse in exchange for recognition of the Curzon Line. At Potsdam, it was too late; Great Britain and the United States lost the bargaining power of the Curzon Line by conceding to it during the war. Poland moved in under the auspices of the U.S.S.R., and Western powers saved face by agreeing only indirectly to the Oder-Neisse line, which policy they used later to the advantage.

In 1946, the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity failed to abide with the Potsdam declaration for Poland; the Soviet Union broke the Potsdam pledge by backing the Provisional government; Allied unity broke down in Germany. And this was the part of the Cold War that caused the crisis of the German-Polish frontier. In war, there is no willing compromise or acquiescence, whether it be a political or military conflict. And as the West revamped their policies to prevent the fall of the Iron Curtain over Germany, they used every device possible. Among them was the German-Polish border question.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE BORDER AND THE FAILURE TO WRITE A GERMAN PEACE TREATY

Because it was an established fact by February 1947, that Poland lay within the Soviet orbit, there was no reason for the West to soft-pedal German-Polish frontier questions. Diplomatic clashes occurred throughout the year, and by December, negotiations reached an impasse. Without four-power agreement, it was impossible to stop Poland from occupying and claiming territories to the Oder-Neisse; and without a German peace treaty, the West refused to recognize the border as final. Four years later, Eastern and Western opinion remained the same. Negotiations failed, and there was no settlement.

The growing East-West dispute did not intimidate the new Polish government. Poland maintained she had recovered land that belonged to her. After his inauguration, February, 1947, President Bierut appointed a commissioner for the "Recovered Territories."<sup>1</sup> Four million Poles lived there. Of Western insistence for border changes, he stated:

. . . such a revision would result in unhappy, not to say dangerous consequences. Millions of people would have to move again--some of them already have

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1. Poland of Today, Vol. II, No. 3, March 1947, p.2.

been moved two, three, and even four times during the past years--and serious political upheavals would be certain to follow . . .

For all practical purposes the case was closed except for the final technicality of legalizing this border settlement by the terms of a peace treaty.<sup>2</sup>

A 1947 change was not only infeasible, but also Poles declared the border settled at Potsdam. The new Polish government reasoned as follows:

. . . the problem of the Polish-German border does not await a solution, for one has already been agreed upon. The solution, moreover, had been implemented by placing the former German territories east of the Oder-Neisse line under Polish administration and by removing the German inhabitants. Whoever advocates any change in the present settlement thereby advocates the revision of an already established frontier.<sup>3</sup>

Poland consistently followed this position the next four years.<sup>4</sup>

To warn the more powerful West of serious consequences arising from border revisions would have been foolhardy by Poland without assurance of outside help. But obviously, the U.S.S.R. backed the Polish communist party. In his inaugural address, President Bierut thanked the Soviet Union for her neighborly aid throughout 1946. In April, the Polish government announced:

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2. Ibid., p. 5.

3. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

4. Ibid., 1947-1951.

. . . It is easy to understand why the new Polish Premier made the capital of the Soviet Union the goal of his first trip abroad. A strong and lasting friendship binds Poland and Soviet Russia together. . . Poland . . . is still haunted by the fear of renewed German aggression, and her friendship with the Soviet Union appears to her the best guarantee and protection against this danger.<sup>5</sup>

There was no secret, Poland and the U.S.S.R. were bound in close friendship, and Poland feared German irridentism.

By insisting that the Big Three, at Potsdam, intended the Oder-Neisse line as the future border, Poland was correct. But intentions are not guarantees, and the United States and Great Britain were free to support whatever frontier they desired at the peace conference. Byrnes' threat and the approval which it received in Germany caused Polish warnings of the firmness and force of Soviet support. Anglo-American policy revisions, the last half of 1946, did not push Poland toward the Soviet Union. Poland was already there. But Western policy gave her a choice: either fulfill Potsdam pledges with regard to elections and win Western friendship also, or ignore agreements and face Western opposition. Poland took the latter course.

In the spring, the foreign ministers of France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States met in

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5. Poland of Today, Vol. II, No. 4, April, 1947, p. 16.

Moscow. Secretary Marshall<sup>6</sup> elaborated on Byrnes' statement and proposed the following:

. . . southern East Prussia should become Polish territory. German Upper Silesia and its industrial complex should also become Polish, but there should be land available to help sustain the economy of Europe. The division of the remaining territory, which is largely agricultural land, required consideration of the needs of the Polish and German peoples and of Europe as a whole.

In order for 66 million people to live in reduced Germany, she will have to become more industrialized. Danger of creating irridentist feelings would be present if the Oder-Neisse line became final.<sup>7</sup>

He also suggested forming a commission to make recommendations on the new border.<sup>8</sup>

Marshall questioned the practicality of giving Poland agricultural areas between Upper Silesia and Danzig, when he stated:

German pre-war imports of foodstuffs had provided about one-fifth of the total food consumed in Germany. Before the war, the German area now under provisional Polish control also contributed over a fifth of Germany's total food supply. If Germany must, in the future, import two-fifths or more of

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6. George Catlet Marshall (1880- ). As General of the United States Army, he served as Chief of Staff, 1939-1945. His first diplomatic mission was as United States Ambassador to China, 1945-1947. During the next two years, he was Secretary of State.

7. (U.S.) Department of State, Germany, 1947-1949, The Story in Documents, European and British Commonwealth Series 9, Publication 3556, March 1950, pp. 146-148.

8. Ibid., pp. 146-148.

her food supply from abroad, the German economy would have to be industrialized to an ever greater extent than before the war or Germany would become a congested slum in the center of Europe.<sup>9</sup>

Although France traditionally hated Germany, she agreed with the American point of view. The French attitude was a reversal of her position in 1945. Then, France accepted without protest the implication that the Oder-Neisse line would be final. Now France realized the danger in requiring an increased German population to live within decreased areas.<sup>10</sup> And Great Britain was in accord with the United States and France.<sup>11</sup>

In reply to Marshall, Molotov reiterated Polish arguments for the Oder-Neisse line. The possibilities of German industrial expansion and the rise of irridentism did not bother the Soviet Union. In November, at the London meeting of the Council, the deadlock continued. Molotov vetoed plans for a commission.<sup>12</sup>

Between 1948 and 1950, a peace conference did not convene because the four powers failed to achieve economic unity in Germany. Economic unity never matured because of

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9. Ibid., pp. 146-148.

10. Ibid., pp. 146-148.

11. Ibid., pp. 146-148.

12. (U.S.) Department of State, Germany, 1947-1949, the Story in Documents, European and British Commonwealth Series 9, Publication 3556, March 1950, pp. 193-195.

the continued disagreement on reparations. During this period, the German-Polish border question declined in importance for it became evident that Germany lost an even larger area, the Soviet zone. Germany was virtually divided in two, and by 1951, a four power peace settlement seemed impossible.

The Soviet Union still maintained that reparations from Germany should be exacted in the form of dollars. For Poland and Soviet Russia, the price was ten billion at 1938 values. In the form of 1947 German production, it would take Germany at least twenty years to pay. "It implied [sic] the establishment of an economic power so comprehensive that it would be in reality a power of life and death over any German Government."<sup>13</sup> Secretary Marshall summarized the Western viewpoint as follows:

. . . we are confronted with a demand for reparations in excess of the Potsdam agreement which would make a German government subservient to its reparations creditor. It is therefore clear that agreement can be reached only under conditions which would not only enslave the German people but would seriously retard the recovery of all Europe.<sup>14</sup>

Before a peace conference for Germany could be considered, it was essential that German internal conditions provide a sound basis for the formation of a government.

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13. Ibid., pp. 193-195.

14. Ibid., pp. 193-195.

The economic chaos, created by the reparations issue, was unsound for a new government. Thus the West rejected Soviet proposals for the establishment of a strong Central government.<sup>15</sup> As long as reparations remained unsettled and no authority existed to control soviet unilateral actions, a German peace treaty was out of the question.<sup>16</sup>

Between March 30, 1948, and May 4, 1949, the Soviet Union tried to oust the West from Berlin. Since 1947, Western powers tried to obtain currency reform for all of Germany. The Soviet Union interpreted the suggestion as interference in her zones, and plans never materialized. As an economic necessity, the West introduced financial reforms into their zones. In retaliation, the Soviet Union issued restrictive measures on transportation going in and out of western Berlin. zones. All communications between western Berlin and other Western zones halted in July. The Soviet Union denounced these measures as harmful because she claimed the introduction of the Western mark into Berlin destroyed the Soviet zones' economy.<sup>17</sup>

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15. (U.S.) Department of State, The Council of Foreign Ministers, Moscow Meeting, Conference Series 98, Publication 2822, April 28, 1947.

16. (U.S.) Department of State, Germany 1947-1949, The Story in Documents, European and British Commonwealth Series 9, Publication 3556, March 1950, pp. 64-67.

17. Ibid., pp. 202-223. For further information, See: Lucius D. Clay, Decision in Germany (New York, 1950), pp. 358-392.

During the next year, negotiations proved to be abortive. Russia's solution required Soviet control of Berlin currency.<sup>18</sup> Without the Western gigantic airlift program Great Britain, France, and the United States would have had to concede to the Soviet Union. After a year and a half, the four powers compromised. They issued only Soviet currency in Berlin, but it was under control of the four powers. The compromise still left the currency problem open for future reform.<sup>19</sup> It was clearly a Western victory by which Soviet Russia lost prestige in Germany. However, the dispute revealed U.S.S.R. intentions to bring Germany within the Soviet sphere by any means.

The failure to achieve German economic unity, the Soviet barrier between Eastern and Western zones, and the Berlin Crisis produced a decided stiffness in Western policy, a determination to stop Soviet advance even if it meant war, and the rise of a new Germany. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was the result, in which western countries of Europe plus the United States, Canada, and Iceland established machinery for the formation of a European Army.<sup>20</sup> During the same year of 1949, the West formed a German

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18. Ibid., pp. 202-223.

19. Ibid., pp. 202-223.

20. (U.S.) Department of State, Participation of the United States Government in International Conferences, Publication 4571, Released October, 1952, pp. 20-31.



Federal Government, created out of the three western zones.<sup>21</sup> In May of the following year, France introduced the Schuman Plan which proposed to merge in a single market, German and French coal and steel industries with those of any other European country.<sup>22</sup> It is significant that the United States and not Soviet Russia participated in these plans. The former intended to stay in Europe and not leave Germany to default. Even without a German peace treaty, the Western powers continued with the German political and economic recovery program.

The loss of Russian prestige can best be expressed by the failure of the communist party in Western zones. When the Soviet authorities imposed a land blockade on Berlin, the fortunes of the communist party in western Germany declined because the German people held the communists responsible for the hardships inflicted on the citizens of Berlin. The weak alibis presented by the communists in justification of the blockade made little impression on the German public. The municipal and county elections in North Rhine Westphalia and in Schleswig-Holstein in October, 1948, showed the waning of communism. They polled 7.8 per cent of the votes in North Rhine Westphalia and 3.3 per cent

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21. (U.S.) Department of State, Germany 1947-1949, The Story in Documents, European and British Commonwealth Series 9, Publication 3556, March 1950, pp. 279-305.

22. (U.S.) Department of State, An Analysis of the Schuman Plan, European and British Commonwealth Series 23, Publication 4176, April 1951, pp. 3-8.

in Schleswig-Holstein, compared with 13.9 per cent and 4.7 per cent respectively in 1947 in the same areas. The communists suffered a similar loss at the municipal and county elections in Lower Saxony the same year. In 1950, there was a further drop in communist strength.<sup>23</sup>

On June 6, 1950, the East German Government ceded thirty-nine thousand square miles to Poland.<sup>24</sup> This unilateral action was the second Soviet attempt to secure the Oder-Neisse border for Poland. If it was meant to intimidate or force a Western submission, the Soviet program failed. The United States and Great Britain protested the action as violating Potsdam commitments. But the West also reiterated their pledges to Poland. They again promised revisions in Poland's favor to the north and west at the peace conference.<sup>25</sup>

There was a stronger reaction in Germany. The German Federal Government, on June 9, formally rejected the agreement between Poland and the eastern Soviet zone and issued a statement declaring all agreements entered into by the East German government null and void, and denied the latter the right to speak in the name of the German people.<sup>26</sup>

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23. (U.S.) Office of the High Commissioner For Germany, Report on Germany, September 21, 1949 - July 31, 1952, pp. 18-22.

24. New York Times, July 7, 1950, p. 10.

25. Ibid., pp. 18-22.

26. New York Times, July 10, 1950, p. 12.

The day after the agreement, ten thousand German refugees from eastern territories protested Soviet action.<sup>27</sup> The mayor of West Berlin declared that: "an understanding on the border must be made between a free Germany and a free Poland and not one that is ruled by the Soviet Marshall."<sup>28</sup>

At Hanover, fifty thousand refugees, having been driven from Silesia, met in protest. One hundred communist leaders who opposed the Kremlin's foreign policy formed the Independent Democratic Party and rejected the East German government's agreement to renounce all territories east of the Oder-Neisse line.<sup>29</sup> With the favor she gained in Poland, the U.S.S.R. lost just as much in Germany.

The Western foreign ministers met in New York during September. They considered using a German army in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In November, the Soviet Union suggested a meeting of the four powers be held to discuss German disarmament. The United States was not willing to call a conference, and in a note she stated:

. . . We find it somewhat extraordinary that the Soviet Government should be so eager that this meeting be held promptly. The Soviet Government delayed over five months, its reply to our note of last May calling upon the Soviet authorities in Germany to disband the extensive and heavily armed paramilitary forces, which they have created in the

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27. Ibid., p. 12.

28. Ibid., p. 6.

29. Ibid., p. 6.

Eastern zone . . . Germany is not a problem which can be isolated from the context of similar areas of tension elsewhere.<sup>30</sup>

On December 22, the three powers sent Soviet Russia identical notes which maintained that German participation in the Western European defense plans was not the only cause of world tension. Finally in February the Soviet Union agreed to discuss other matters at the conference. The foreign deputies met in Paris from March to May and could not agree on an agenda. The possibility of a final peace treaty for Germany was out of the question at that time.<sup>31</sup>

The period between 1947 and 1951 produced nothing toward the German peace treaty and hence, the settlement of the German-Polish border question. During the four years, the West maintained that they did not consider the Oder-Neisse frontier as final, and that it could not be so assumed until the German peace treaty was signed. Nor did the West recognize the unilateral actions of Soviet Russia, but they were powerless to prevent the Soviets from giving thirty-nine thousand square miles to the Poles. In all practical respects, except for international recognition, however, the border was final. And therefore, the German-Polish boundary lost its importance as a frontier problem.

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30. Ibid., p. 6.

31. (U.S.) Department of State, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XX, No. 289, Publication 2499, May, 1951, pp. 459-462.

But as a political weapon, it played a great part in Western policy to halt the spread of Soviet influence in Germany. And this is how the German-Polish border will remain along the Oder-Neisse until the German peace treaty is signed.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

The thirty-nine thousand miles of disputed territory which Poland has controlled since the end of the war will be conditioned by three factors if there is a settlement: economics, irredentism, and Stalinism.

From the economic standpoint, the border must be adjusted so that both Polish and German financial stability in world trade can enable their inhabitants to produce a living. It is essential that Poland should have Danzig because that seaport is the natural outlet for the Vistula River. The Vistula Basin is the heart of Poland by which her inland products are transported to the sea. Because the U.S.S.R. has taken Königsberg in East Prussia, Danzig and Gdynia are the only other major seaports on the Baltic that Poland could have. It would not be a loss for Germany because she has many western ports. But Danzig would be the only main seaport for Poland. The American plan included a coastline of one hundred miles west along the Baltic for Poland. Germany could do without this also.

Poland is low on raw materials for industry. She is virtually an agricultural producing area. Upper Silesia, with the coal potentiality would help to balance Polish economy so that she would not have to depend entirely upon

exports for industrial raw materials. Germany does not need coal or the industries of Silesia as much as agricultural producing areas which are essential to her economy. Germany's main home source for foodstuffs before the war was the section between Danzig in the north and Upper Silesia in the south. If Germany were to lose this permanently, she would have to import two-fifths of her foodstuffs. And to do this, she must then increase her industrial output by one-fifth of her 1936 level to balance her trade. With the expulsion of about six million Germans out of this area since the war and about five million Poles from east of the Curzon Line, both Germany and Poland have the problem of supporting a larger population on reduced areas. Although Poland does not need the area east of the Oder-Neisse for her agricultural production, she does need room for her people. And of course, Germany has the same problem. The United States wanted to set up a commission to investigate the conditions here with the idea that the territory would be divided some way between Poland Germany. For these reasons, only a partial border can be determined at the present. Danzig and Upper Silesia should go to Poland, and the agricultural area divided between Germany and Poland by a commission.

But economic considerations alone would not assure a stable frontier. If Germany's loss were too great, she might again use it as an excuse for aggression. Although

Germany owned Danzig and the corridor from 1795 to 1914, Hitler's Danzig ambitions were provoked by the desire to link East Prussia with the Fatherland. Now that East Prussia is divided between Poland and the U.S.S.R., there will be no geographical excuse, that all of Germany's territory should be linked together. But Upper Silesia belonged to Prussia since 1740; actually, from an historical point of view, German irredentism could work up a case for Danzig, Silesia, and the agricultural area between. German irredentism fed by an unstable economy would be dangerous and a cause for future disputes over the German-Polish frontier. However, if the Poles gave Germany enough land to help with her food-stuffs problem, the effect of German loss elsewhere might be modified.

But the whole decision rests on the will of the Soviet Union. The United States, Great Britain, and France are unable to move the border, without going to war. The U.S.S.R. has several alternatives. She could win French support, perhaps, for the Oder-Neisse line by backing French annexation of the Saar at the Peace Conference. Because Poland is a Soviet satellite, the Soviet Union could compromise with Germans in hopes of gaining influence in Germany. However, placing Germany over Poland would probably be unsuccessful because Germans have shown by elections they do not like communism in any form. And German attitude is evident to the Soviet Union. If she had thought there was



a chance for communism and Soviet influence in Germany, the U.S.S.R. would not have forced the East zone to cede the area to Poland in 1950. It is probable that the Soviet Union will do nothing. If there is a German peace treaty in the near future, the U.S.S.R. can insist on the Allies recognizing the Oder-Neisse as final because the Soviet Union has military command of the area and she has moved in millions of Poles who are already settled. Unless Russia can obtain a better trade on some other question at the peace conference, the Oder-Neisse is the final border between Germany and Poland until the next war.

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## APPENDIX

### A Partial Text of the Protocol of the Proceedings of the Yalta Conference

#### V. Reparation

The following protocol has been approved:

1. Germany must pay in kind for the losses caused by her to the Allied nations in the course of the war. Reparations are to be received in the first instance by those countries which have borne the main burden of the war, have suffered the heaviest losses and have organized victory over the enemy.

2. Reparation in kind is to be exacted from Germany in three following forms:

a) Removals within two years from the surrender of Germany or the cessation of organized resistance from the national wealth of Germany located on the territory of Germany herself as well as outside her territory (equipment, machine-tools, ships, rolling stock, German investments abroad, shares of industrial, transport and other enterprises in Germany etc.), these removals to be carried out chiefly for purposes of destroying the war potential of Germany.

b) Annual deliveries of goods from current production for a period to be fixed.

c) Use of German labour.

3. For the working out on the above principles of a detailed plan for exaction of reparation from Germany an Allied Reparation Commission will be set up in Moscow. It will consist of three representatives--one from the Union of Soviet S.R., one from the UK and one from the USA.

4. With regard to the fixing of the total sum of the reparation as well as the distribution of it among the countries which suffered from the German aggression the Soviet and American delegations agreed as follows:

"The Moscow Reparation Commission should take in its initial studies as a basis for discussion the suggestion of the Soviet Government that the total sum of the reparation in accordance with the point (a) and (b) of the paragraph 2 should be 20 billion dollars and that 50% of it should go to the Union of Soviet S.R.

The British delegation was of the opinion that pending consideration of the reparation question by the Moscow Reparations Commission as one of the proposals to be considered by the Commission.



## VII. Poland

The following Declaration on Poland was agreed by the Conference:

A new situation has been created in Poland as a result of her complete liberation by the Red Army. This calls for the establishment of a Polish Provisional Government which can be more broadly based than was possible before the recent liberation of Western part of Poland. The Provisional Government which is now functioning in Poland should therefore be reorganized on a broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad. This new Government should then be called the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity.

M. Molotov, Mr. Harriman and Sir A. Clark Kerr are authorized as a commission to consult in the first instance in Moscow with members of the present Provisional Government and with other Polish democratic leaders from within Poland and from abroad, with a view to the reorganization of the present Government along the above lines. This Polish Provisional Government of National Unity shall be pledged to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot. In these elections all democratic and anti-Nazi parties shall have the right to take part and to put forward candidates.

When a Polish Provisional Government of National Unity has been properly formed in conformity with the above, the Government of the USSR, which now maintains diplomatic relations with the present Provisional Government of Poland, and the Government of the UK and the Government of the USA will establish diplomatic relations with the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity, and will exchange Ambassadors by whose reports the respective Governments will be kept informed about the situation in Poland.

The three Heads of Government consider that the Eastern frontier of Poland should follow the Curzon Line with digressions from it in some regions of five to eight kilometres in favour of Poland. They recognize that Poland must receive substantial accessions of territory in the North and West. They feel that the opinion of the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity should be sought in due course on the extent of these accessions and that the final delimitations of the Western frontier of Poland should thereafter await the Peace Conference.

## A Partial Text of the Potsdam

### Declaration

#### IV. Reparations

1. Reparations claims of the USSR shall be met by removals from the zone of Germany occupied by the USSR and from appropriate German external assets.
2. The USSR undertakes to settle the reparation claims of Poland from its own share of reparations.
3. The reparation claims of the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries entitled to reparations shall be met from the western zones and from appropriate German external assets.
4. In addition to the reparations to be taken by the USSR from its own zone of occupation, the USSR shall receive additionally from the Western Zones: (A) 15 percent of such usable and complete industrial capital equipment, in the first place from the metallurgical, chemical and machine manufacturing industries, as is unnecessary for the German peace economy and should be removed from the western zones of Germany, in exchange for an equivalent value of food, coal, potash, zinc, timber, clay products, petroleum products, and such other commodities as may be agreed upon. (B) 10 percent of such industrial capital equipment as is unnecessary for the German peace economy and should be removed from the western zones, to be transferred to the Soviet Government on reparations account without payment or exchange of any kind in return.

Removals of equipment as provided in (A) and (B) above shall be made simultaneously.
5. The amount of equipment to be removed from the western zones on account of reparations must be determined within six months from now at the latest.
6. Removals of industrial capital equipment shall begin as soon as possible and shall be completed within two years from the determination specified in paragraph 5. The delivery of products covered by 4(A) above shall begin as soon as possible and shall be made by the USSR in agreed installments within five years of the date hereof. The determination of the amount and character of the industrial capital equipment unnecessary for the German peace economy and therefore available for reparations shall be made by the control council under policies fixed by the Allied Commission of Reparations, with the participation of France, subject to the final approval of the zone commander in the zone from which the equipment is to be removed.

7. Prior to the fixing of the total amount of equipment subject to removal, advance deliveries shall be made in respect of such equipment as will be determined to be eligible for delivery in accordance with the procedure set forth in the last sentence of paragraph 6.

8. The Soviet Government renounces all claims in respect of reparations to shares of German enterprises which are located in the western zones of occupation in Germany as well as to German foreign assets in all countries except those specified in paragraph 9 below.

9. The Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America renounce their claims in respect of reparations to shares of German enterprises which are located in the eastern zone of occupation in Germany, as well as to German foreign assets in Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, Rumania and Eastern Austria.

10. The Soviet Government makes no claims to gold captured by the Allied troops in Germany.

## VI.

### City of Koenigsberg and Adjacent Area

The conference examined a proposal by the Soviet Government that pending the final determination of territorial questions at the peace settlement the section of the western frontier of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which is adjacent to the Baltic Sea should pass from a point of the eastern shore of the Bay of Danzig to the east, north of Braunsberg-Goldap, to the meeting point of the frontiers of Lithuania, the Polish Republic and East Prussia.

The conference has agreed in principle to the proposal of the Soviet Government concerning the ultimate transfer to the Soviet Union of the City of Koenigsberg and the area adjacent to it as described above subject to expert examination of the actual frontier.

The President of the United States and the British Prime Minister have declared that they will support the proposal of the conference at the forthcoming peace settlement.

## IX.

### Poland

On the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity they defined their attitude in the following statement:  
A. We have taken note with pleasure of the agreement reached among representative Poles from Poland and abroad which has

made possible the formation, in accordance with the decisions reached at the Crimea Conference, of a Polish Provisional Government of National Unity recognized by the three powers. The establishment by the British and United States Governments of diplomatic relations with the Polish Provisional Government has resulted in the withdrawal of their recognition from the former Polish Government in London, which no longer exists.

The British and United States Governments have taken measures to protect the interest of the Polish Provisional Government as the recognized government of the Polish State in the property belonging to the Polish State located in their territories and under their control, whatever the form of this may be. They have further taken measures to prevent alienation to third parties of such property. All proper facilities will be given to the Polish Provisional Government for the exercise of the ordinary legal remedies for the recovery of any property belonging to the Polish State which may have been wrongfully alienated.

The three powers are anxious to assist the Polish Provisional Government in facilitating the return to Poland as soon as practicable of all Poles abroad who wish to go, including members of the Polish armed forces and the Merchant Marine. They expect that those Poles who return home shall be accorded personal and property rights on the same basis as all Polish citizens.

The three powers note that the Polish Provisional Government in accordance with the decisions of the Crimea Conference has agreed to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot in which all democratic and anti-Nazi parties shall have the right to take part and to put forward candidates, and that representatives of the Allied press shall enjoy full freedom to report to the world upon developments in Poland before and during the elections

In conformity with the agreement on Poland reached at the Crimea Conference the three heads of government have sought the opinion of the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity in regard to the Accession of territory in the north and west which Poland should receive. The President of the National Council of Poland and members of the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity have been received at the Conference and have fully presented their views. The three heads of government reaffirm their opinion that the final delimitation of the western frontier of Poland should await the peace settlement.

The three heads of government agree that, pending the final determination of Poland's western frontier, the former German territories east of a line running from the Baltic Sea immediately west of Swinemunde, and thence along

the Oder River to the confluence of the western Neisse River and along the western Neisse to the Czechoslovak frontier, including that portion of East Prussia not placed under the administration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in accordance with the understanding reached at this conference and including the area of the former free City of Danzig, shall be under the administration of the Polish State and for such purposes should not be considered as part of the Soviet zone of occupation in Germany.

### XIII.

#### Orderly Transfers of German Populations

The conference reached the following agreement on the removal of Germans from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary:

The three governments having considered the question in all its aspects, recognize that the transfer to Germany of German populations, or elements thereof, remaining in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, will have to be undertaken. They agree that any transfers that take place should be effected in an orderly and humane manner.

Since the influx of a large number of Germans into Germany would increase the burden already resting on the occupying authorities, they consider that the Allied Control Council in Germany should in the first instance examine the problem with special regard to the question of the equitable distribution of these Germans among the several zones of occupation. They are accordingly instructing their respective representatives on the Control Council to report to their governments as soon as possible the extent to which such persons have already entered Germany from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and to submit an estimate of the time and rate at which further transfers could be carried out, having regard to the present situation in Germany.

The Czechoslovak Government, the Polish Provisional Government and the Control Council in Hungary are at the same time being informed of the above, and are being requested meanwhile to suspend further expulsions pending the examination by the governments concerned of the report from their representatives on the Control Council.